Chronicles

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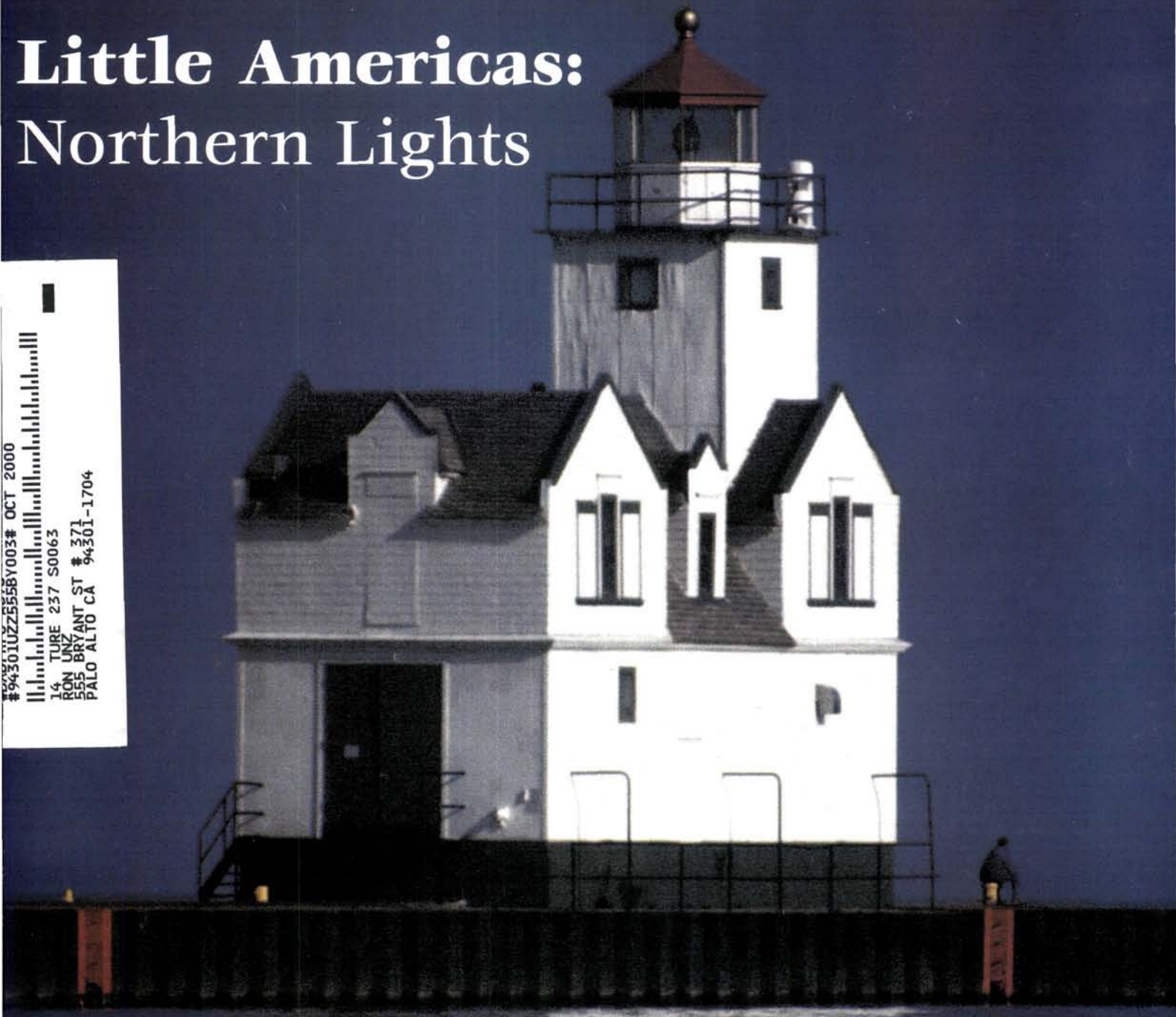
Northern Lights



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Northwoods Novelists,
Rusting Cities, and the First Lindbergh

Interview - Carolyn Chute, Novelist and Militia Leader

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Canadian Politics

Greg Kaza's article on Canadian Red Tory and former prime minister Brian Mulroney ("Bush's Red Tory," *Vital Signs*, August) was well informed and insightful almost throughout. But near the end, Mr. Kaza erroneously stated that Reform Party leader Preston Manning "has no intention of abandoning his conservative base." In fact, he already has. Except for one issue—government spending and the related areas of taxation, deficit, and debt—the Manning party is barely distinguishable from Canada's others.

Former supporters differ on when the Reform Party went off the rails. For some, it was during the 1997 federal election campaign, when Reform joined the *status quo* parties in refusing to discuss immigration. Since then, Manning has made it his priority to merge Reform with the Red Tories of the Progressive Conservatives to create a new group called United Alternative, which he desperately hopes will be acceptable to corporate donors and the Toronto media. Typical of this supposed populist's leadership style, Manning threatens to expel Reform MPs who oppose the plan. Consequently, the party is on the verge of splitting.

This project has so preoccupied Manning that he has had little to say about anything else, except to proclaim his wholehearted support for Canada's participation in bombing the Serbs.

Some Canadians say this is a disappointing end to a party that once held promise. Others say the party's direction was apparent soon after its founding in 1987. But it would take an extreme optimist—or a liberal—to say that Manning has done Canadian politics any good.

—Greg Klein
Calgary, Alberta

On Military Readiness

I'd like to commend Christopher Check on his great piece "Not Ready, Aim, Misfire" (August). It was superb and right on the mark.

I subscribe to the Marine Corps *Times*, which is mainly aimed at active-duty Marines. Mostly, the *Times* is concerned with this benefit and that benefit, and just how to get them all. I won't resubscribe; it depresses me.

My remembrance of the "old" Corps is one of fondness because of the lack of "benefits." I cannot remember even one "benefit." I think the primary reason we joined up in those days (World War II) was because of patriotism. We sure were not in it because of whatever "benefits" we could receive.

Mr. Check's report that the Navy thinks it can make its 22,000 vacancies more attractive by installing shipboard TV sets and e-mail facilities says a lot about today's potential "fighting men." I can remember when the ladies first "came aboard." The only order of the day was: "No fraternizing on base." If any of those women Marines ever got pregnant or complained of "sexual harassment," I sure don't remember it.

The revelation that today's Corps spends more money on child-development centers and family housing than it does on ammunition is no surprise to me: It's all in the Marine Corps *Times*. The last line of the Kipling poem that Mr. Check quoted hit it right on the button: "If you want to win your battles take an' work your bloomin' guns." It's hard to imagine today's GIs "workin' their bloomin' guns."

—Ralph Willis
Hemet, CA

Regarding Christopher Check's article on the lack of recruits in the U.S. military: Ayn Rand may have said some things that *Chronicles* readers would find hard to swallow, but I remember one observation she made to the effect that freedom would never lack for people to fight for it. Maybe this is the core of the U.S. military's problem.

—Wilma J. Moore
Santa Rosa, CA

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THE FBI/BATF RAID on the David Koresh home (not compound) has been the subject of controversy since the first day the BATF zealots tried to storm the house. All along, the FBI and the Justice Department have fabricated stories and information with an effrontery that would astonish even the Clintons: Koresh was stockpiling illegal arms, they said (he was a legal dealer accused of a minor licensing infraction); he was abusing the children, said Reno (no, claimed the FBI, they never made such a charge); the Branch Davidians committed suicide rather than submit to arrest (there is good evidence not only that the FBI used incendiary devices but also that their tanks fired into the house in the final firestorm).

Now Miss Reno wants us to trust a career Republican politician whom she selected to lead the investigation. Anyone who has watched the tapes of the congressional hearings (captured well in the documentary, *Waco: The Rules of Engagement*) knows that the Republicans let the Democrats get away (perhaps literally) with murder. Tom Lantos and Chuck Schumer—the two most sinister figures ever to sit in Congress—bullied and abused decent and patriotic witnesses, ignored the evidence, and misrepresented facts that were on the record, while the Republican members were contented with whining or making, from time to time, fine-sounding patriotic statements. They never stood up to the lying and hate-mongering of their opposition. The Republicans had their chance.

The most likely explanation for the impending investigation is simple: There is too much information out there in books and films and on the Internet. Independent-minded people on the left and right do not hesitate to accuse Reno and company of murder. What to do? Why not leak some damaging hints, set up a mock investigation that ends up in the disgrace of one or two agents who only followed orders, and proclaim to the world that "the system works"? It is a technique that got Bill Clinton off the hook, and it will certainly work for his attorney general.

We may never know what really happened at Waco. One thing is certain: No representative of either party can be trusted to head the investigation. Why not set up a blue-ribbon commission with Gerry Spence, Ross Perot, Alex Cockburn, Jesse Ventura, Noam Chomsky, and Pat Buchanan? They are all mavericks with a taste for plain talk. They agree on very few things and might just have the courage to find out the truth and tell it to the American people. Which is why none of them will ever be trusted by the attorney general of the United States.

—*Thomas Fleming*

JANET RENO fears that her credibility has been damaged. Imagine that! Just because the federal government used "pyrotechnic devices" against the Branch Davidian compound?

That might do it, given the Reno Justice Department's insistence over so many years that no such devices were used: Except, well, it now seems that maybe that wasn't quite 100-percent accurate. Yes, the government *did* use pyrotechnics, the *Dallas Morning News* revealed in late August, and great has been Reno's discombobulation since then.

Investigations, internal and congressional, were pending just before Labor Day. Re-investigations, you might call them. We've been down this trail before. Subsequent to the Branch Davidian calamity, in which more than 80 Koreshians died (not to mention four government agents), Reno commissioned an internal investigation.

It was not what everybody and his dog would call a penetrating inquiry. Former Watergate prosecutor Henry Ruth, Jr., who helped with the Treasury Department's review of the disaster, said of the report that Justice eventually produced: "People at the time thought the Justice Department evaluation was a whitewash in the sense that it didn't tell the full facts about what was known. It clearly was written to vindicate the attorney general . . . " Ruth says the investigators "didn't use the proper types of investigatory techniques necessary to explore the facts." Hence various facts did not get explored.

And that was just the start—a grisly, but in retrospect hardly surprising, preview of the Clinton administration's favorite indoor sport, fact management.

Reno is distressed to see her credibility in tatters? Who knew the dear lady had any credibility left after seven years of helping Bill Clinton keep the lid on his private embarrassments, like the case of the FBI files that wound up in the White House?

The truth is, of course, that no one in the administration, at this point, is longer in the credibility department than is she. Maybe that thought will cheer her up.

The tone of an administration comes from the top—the White House. No administration, it should go without saying, will be more honest than the chief executive directs it to be.

Even before Monica, Clinton made it abundantly plain that the only facts he wanted laid out in the sunshine for impartial inspection were those that embarrassed Republicans, spiffed up his own image, or, preferably, both. A federal judge in Arkansas—an ex-student of the President's—recently fined her former professor $90,000 for lying under oath. That modest figure was not enough, probably, but it made official what everyone has known for a long time: Bill Clinton is a liar.

What torments his disregard for truth may have caused Janet Reno, no one will ever know. What is clear is that, with this administration, nothing is ever clear. Everything is murky. The sun never penetrates to dark corners of deed and motive; the moral cobwebs block it out.

With the attorney general's "credibility" at stake, and her critics pressing hard, we may find out in due course what really went on at the Davidian compound: what the pyrotechnics were for, why the Army's Delta Force was on hand, what the hell the federal government thought it was doing anyway, employing military-style measures against nutty but not noticeably violent people.

It seems obvious that, considering how the siege worked out, those who laid it, approved it, executed it would give anything to be able to take back everything. What were they thinking, though, in the first place? That all they had to do was demonstrate the power of the U.S. government? Count on the Koreshians' patriotic instincts? What?

The whole misconceived, misbegotten enterprise speaks strong words about the arrogance of unchecked power. This same arrogance blocks the channels of conscience, feeds the arrogant assumption that as for the voters, those boobs, *we'll* tell 'em what they need to know, when and if they need to know it.

Did Janet Reno sense what she was getting in for when she signed on for the

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job that Kimba Wood and Zoe Baird had failed to land, due to extracurricular embarrassments? Whatever virtue Reno had in 1993, she lost fast. After all, that's the big boss's specialty—moral deflowering.

—*William Murchison*

THE TEACHING OF EVOLUTION is back in the news, in a case that the media—with their usual sensationalism—are comparing to the Scopes trial of 75 years ago. On August 10, Steven Green, legal director of the Washington-based Americans United for Separation of Church and State, sent a letter to the Kansas State Board of Education, threatening that if the board adopted a "creationist perspective" in the state's science standards, his group would "not hesitate to bring a legal challenge." On August 11, by a six-to-four majority, the statewide-elected board decided to remove any questions on "macroevolution" (the theory that maintains generally that species evolve from one another, and that, in particular, men and apes have a common primate ancestor) from state science exams. The board did not remove questions on "microevolution" (the theory that species themselves evolve as result of environmental factors) or "natural selection" (the theory that some species or some variations within species die while others survive as a result of better adaptation to the natural environment). The board left the 304 local school districts in Kansas free to decide for themselves whether they would continue to teach macroevolution, microevolution, and/or natural selection.

On August 13, the American Civil Liberties Union wrote to Kansas local school superintendents warning them that they would risk lawsuits if they should attempt to teach "creationism" (the theory that the world and each species were created by God, rather than being the result of an unpremeditated evolutionary series of natural accidents). People for the American Way, according to the Associated Press, also suggested that "they would consider lawsuits if religion-based standards were implemented."

Most local school districts barely have the funds to accomplish the educational goals they set for themselves, and the threat of a lawsuit, which could easily cost a district hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees, is a potent one. In the meantime, the nation's newspapers were full of articles ridiculing Kansas, accusing the state of possessing a "flat earth" mentality, of hurting its students on national aptitude examinations, and, most damningly, of having caved in to irrational religious fundamentalism. Intriguingly enough, most press reports failed to mention the limited nature of what had been done (preserving local autonomy in teaching, preserving microevolution and natural selection on statewide examinations) and were little more than "sky is falling" incantations against the purported prairie yahoos.

What was going on? Nothing less, really, than a preemptive strike by the forces of liberal secularism and centralization seeking to stem a groundswell in the states to take back the education of their children from the supervision of the United States Supreme Court in particular and the federal government in general. In the early 1960's, the Supreme Court ruled (clearly against a century of American tradition and the Framers' design) that the states could not require prayers or Bible-reading in their schools, and in 1987, in *Edwards* v. *Aguillard*, the Court ruled, in an opinion by arch-liberal activist William Brennan, that Louisiana could not mandate the teaching of creationism alongside evolution because to do so would be an establishment of religion prohibited by the First Amendment. Close readers of American history and the First Amendment (and this journal) know that the text of that amendment is directed only at Congress, not the states, and at the time the First Amendment was ratified, there actually were several established state churches and 11 states with religious qualifications for the franchise or for serving in public office. Still, using the dubious "selective incorporation" theory (which has rather less support in the historical record than does evolution in the fossil record), the Supreme Court, in the early 20th century, declared that the 14th Amendment (which forbids states from depriving any person of the "equal protection" of the laws or of life, liberty, or property without "due process") somehow turned the First Amendment (and other provisions of the Bill of Rights) from a protection against the federal government into a club that the federal courts could use to beat back state government.

There can be no doubt, however, that the Constitution's Framers, and even the framers of the 14th Amendment, did not intend to change the long-standing Anglo-American tradition that local governments are best equipped to handle domestic matters such as education, and even the Supreme Court, in its 1995 *U.S. v. Lopez* decision, reaffirmed this truth when it declared unconstitutional a federal law prohibiting the possession of firearms in or near local schools on the grounds that school security was a local, not a federal, matter.

The friends of local government and the enemies of secularism and centralization have been somewhat emboldened by *Lopez* and by closely reading some language in Brennan's opinion in *Aguillard*, where he acknowledged that "Teaching a variety of scientific theories about the origins of humankind to schoolchildren might be validly done with the clear secular intent of enhancing the effectiveness of science instruction," as well as Justice Scalia's statement in his dissent in *Aguillard* that "The people of Louisiana, including those who are Christian fundamentalists, are quite entitled, as a secular matter to have whatever scientific evidence there may be against evolution presented in their schools. . . ." One can only hope that conservatives will refuse to cave in to the bullying tactics of the left, and perhaps find the funds and the courage to meet them on their own ground.

The scientific support for the theory of macroevolution is weak; there are, for example, a plethora of what seem to be spontaneously created species to be found in the fossil record of the Cambrian period. Philip Johnson, the Berkeley law professor who has exposed the thinness of the scientific evidence on which proponents of macroevolution rely, reports that a Chinese paleontologist who lectures on these fossils states that "In China we can criticize Darwin but not the government. In America you can criticize the government but not Darwin." To criticize Darwin, to challenge macroevolution, even to remove mandatory questions on the subject from statewide exams in a Midwestern state is enough to rattle the chains of the nine percent of Americans who disdain the notion that a governing intelligence created the universe and may still be in control. That nine percent, which has managed of late to prevail in the federal courts, may soon have some serious battles on their hands, and it is no wonder they appear to be running scared. The Kansas skirmish shows that it isn't cre-

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ationism that they fear, but democracy.

—*Stephen B. Presser*

FLINT, MICHIGAN, is the birthplace of both General Motors and the United Auto Workers union (UAW), which makes the recent demise of Buick City, its last automobile assembly plant, more than a little ironic. In June, GM closed Buick City, idling 2,200 hourly workers at a plant that once employed 28,000 building Buick LeSabres and Pontiac Bonnevilles. About one-third of the laid-off workers will be eligible for retirement benefits, while the remaining two-thirds could be called to work at other facilities.

Since the late 1970's, GM has eliminated more than 250,000 jobs, including 50,000 in the Flint area. Buick City's closure is part of GM's strategy to eliminate up to 50,000 more jobs at its North American operations in the next few years. Once criticized as "Generous Motors," the automaker is slashing jobs in response to Wall Street's demands that it make itself more competitive in the global economy. GM has built automobiles in Flint since 1904. No more.

"This action is one more example of the 'America last' strategy that's driving the biggest corporations in the U.S. to cut the guts out of the economic future of today's workers and their children," UAW President Stephen Yokich said. "Closing this facility is a betrayal of GM's workforce, of the community and of the country . . ." Union officials noted that GM is building eight plants overseas to take advantage of cheaper labor costs. The UAW, unable to stop the shutdown of auto towns like Flint, has settled for collective bargaining agreements that require GM to offer remaining employees jobs at other facilities.

Flint autoworkers went on strike for 54 days last year in response to fears that GM planned to send their blue-collar jobs to Mexico as a result of NAFTA. "General Motors would love to pull out, not just out of Flint, but out of the United States," one striker said as Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA" blared out of a picket-line loudspeaker. "They've got our backs against the wall." The strike at two Flint GM facilities eventually idled more than 190,000 GM workers nationwide, effectively shutting down the corporation's North American operation. The UAW was born during the sitdown strikes in Flint in the mid-1930's, but the reaction this time was very different. "They're toast," one Wall Street analyst said of Flint autoworkers when the strike finally ended.

NAFTA critic Pat Buchanan received 37 percent of the vote in Michigan's 1996 GOP primary, his best performance in any state. Buchanan benefited from UAW members in blue-collar locales like Flint who crossed over to cast a ballot for his "America First" agenda. But in the next election, with the Republicans seemingly poised to nominate George W. Bush and the Democrats set to pick Al Gore, there are few options—economic or political—for the former autoworkers of Buick City.

—*Greg Kaza*

THE FIGHTING IN DAGESTAN was abating as of late August. Russian firepower had slowed the Chechen-backed Islamic militants, led by an international corps of Islamists, including Chechen "field commander" (read: "warlord") Shamil Basayev and the Jordanian professional militant known only as "Khattab." They had seized 20 towns and villages in the mountainous region of western Dagestan, and the emissaries of the newly proclaimed "Islamic Republic," reportedly backed by Osama Bin Ladin's network, fanned out to the capitals of the Islamic world, seeking aid and recognition, casting themselves as holy warriors fighting the armies of the infidel.

Only by concentrating the firepower of their shrinking number of battle-ready units and deploying elite airborne troops—Yeltsin's Pretorian Guard, usually held in reserve near Moscow—did the Russians turn back the tide. For now. Nevertheless, the mujahedin are said to have made inroads in recruiting the mountain peoples of the hodgepodge Republic of Dagestan (in part because Russian commanders displayed their usual hamfisted approach to counter-insurgency warfare, killing innocent villagers along with "bandits" in air and artillery bombardments), and Basayev has announced that the war is simply entering a new "partisan" phase. Moscow is gripped by fear of terrorist attacks, and Russian troops have failed to seal the border with Chechnya. In the Russian hinterlands, the parents of conscript troops are uneasy, as are the troops themselves: The Russians despise the Caucasian "blacks" and back punitive actions against Basayev's bases in Chechnya, but nobody wants to die to keep these wildmen within the Russian Federation. The often puny, diseased conscripts don't know what they are supposed to be fighting for, since most Russians have already fled Chechnya, Dagestan, and Ingushetia for the Russian Caucasus. The Stavropol and Krasnodar Cossacks are arming themselves, preparing again to play the role of frontier guardian.

Meanwhile, the Chechens have stepped up their most lucrative cottage industry: kidnapping. The hostage trade is a source of extra income for the Chechen clans, but it also helps explain just what the Islamists are up to in Dagestan. Ranging as far away as Moscow, the Chechen kidnapping gangs are no longer restricting themselves to ransom-style snatches. They want slaves, Russian slaves, but of a particular type—technicians who can operate the oil pipelines and refineries in Chechnya, for the Chechens (and their patrons) have big plans. Those plans involve Caspian Sea oil, pipeline routes through the Caucasus, and the creation of an Islamic confederation in the North Caucasus. But the projected confederation needs an outlet on the Caspian, so Dagestan was targeted by the Islamic geostrategists. It may need one on the Black Sea as well, which explains Chechen terrorist Salman Raduyev's attempted assassination of Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze last year and his backing of Georgian Abkaz separatists. But the zeal of the Islamists and the aid of Muslim states was not enough. The "field commanders" needed a mediator, someone with contacts in the Caucasus, the West (the Russians are justifiably suspicious of Western oil companies who would like to cut them out of the potentially lucrative Caspian oil flow), and Moscow.

They found their man—or maybe he found them—in the person of Kremlin courtier, media magnate, and banking "oligarch" Boris Abramovich Berezovsky, known as "BAB" far and wide. BAB is alternately a Russian patriot, a captain of industry (he is part owner of the Sibneft oil company, among others), a suffering Jew (his critics are automatically dubbed "antisemitic" by his growing stable of newspapers and TV stations), Russia's Moriarty, and a Thinker of Great Thoughts who uses his media to opine on Russian politics, history, economics, and society. But most of all, BAB is a survivor. With Yeltsin a lame duck, investigators seizing his Swiss bank accounts, and his enemies poised for a post-Yeltsin

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comeback, the struggling oligarch may need a new base of operations, perhaps in the Caucasus. At any rate, the word is out in Moscow that it was BAB as much as Bin Ladin who inspired the Dagestan fighting: If the fighting got out of control, Yeltsin could declare a state of emergency and call off the next elections. At the very least, BAB could make himself useful once more, mediating between the Kremlin and his old friends in Chechnya, regaining lost ground in Moscow.

—*Denis Petrov*

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION is still one year away, but now is the time for American patriots of all stripes to reconsider their political attachments. Since the end of World War II, domestic opponents of the American Empire have struggled fruitlessly to contain its growth. As a philosopher friend recently remarked, we have no politics today in America. There is no significant contest of issues, policies, or principles, merely an imperial party line adhered to by the media, the two-party cartel, and much, though certainly not all, of the vast American middle class.

The anti-imperialist movement has failed, most obviously because it has used the wrong vehicle—the Republican Party. The Democratic Party of the 1960's and 1970's was hopeless, and anti-imperialists accepted the only alternative available in the two-party system. But the Republican Party, in its origins, its predominant interests, and its natural ideology has always been a vehicle of the imperial state—even before the Democratic Party succumbed early in this century.

It is truly astounding that "conservatives" who have been betrayed over and over again by the empty rhetoric of shallow, cynical politicians should still, at this late date, be attached to this failed vehicle. But there are signs that the unnatural attachment is beginning to wear thin.

Third parties have no chance of winning—so goes the conventional wisdom. Very well, but the purpose of political action is not necessarily to win, but to influence the outcome. The most constructive antiestablishment influence exercised in recent history has come from the grassroots movements organized by George Wallace and Ross Perot. If Wallace had not built a large movement, the Republican Party would still be in rhetoric, as well as in actuality, the party of Rockefeller. And whatever may be said about Perot, he reduced the Democrats and Republicans both to minority parties in two presidential elections. If Pat Buchanan had run an independent campaign in 1992 or 1996, he would today exercise much more influence over events.

Even in my limited, mostly apolitical acquaintance there are numerous former stalwart Republican activists who have finally defected and are now without a home.

What if dissidents—the Constitution (formerly U.S. Taxpayers), Reform, Southern, and Libertarian parties—could be united behind a presidential slate of integrity and articulateness—say, Sen. Bob Smith and Rep. Ron Paul? The object would not be to elect a President, but to change the terms of public discourse, to turn the press conferences called presidential "debates" into the real thing. Given a forum, men of character could easily uncover the empty suits of creatures like George W. Bush and Al Gore. The candidates would, of course, have to ignore the media and polls and speak directly to the people in every way possible.

Ideally, such a coalition would also field candidates in some states for the House of Representatives and governor, with the same object of education in view. There are plenty of articulate, attractive, and principled young conservatives around. In a three-way race with a strong ticket at the top, a few people might even be elected in the states. A long-range goal would be to get a balance of power in the U.S. House so that the two-party cartel would be unable to organize the process without concessions to the swing vote.

Here's a suggested platform that should appeal to all of the dissident parties: an immediate, real, and substantial middle-class tax cut; an immediate enforcement of immigration laws and a moratorium on legal immigration; an immediate end to affirmative action and a reduction of business regulations like the Americans With Disabilities Act; an investigation of the government atrocities at Waco and elsewhere and punishment of those responsible; defeminization of the military; an end to imperial military actions like Kosovo; legislation to enforce the Tenth Amendment by removing all state domestic concerns from the jurisdiction of federal courts, including criminal law and abortion; and an end to all federal expenditures and regulations regarding education.

I would advise setting aside the issues of Social Security, Medicare, and the federal debt for the nonce simply because the opportunity for two-party lies and confusion is too great. Other than that, add your own ideas, and I'll vote for them.

Does anybody have a better idea?

—*Clyde Wilson*

NATO has emerged victorious from the war in Yugoslavia, and the real power within NATO, the United States and its Armed Forces, has given the world a salutary demonstration of its ability to enforce peace and security in Europe. This, say Mr. Clinton's pundits, was America's finest hour since the end of World War II.

Perhaps they are right. However, there is disturbing evidence that the pundits are wrong, as they usually are, on both points: U.S./NATO has not brought peace to Kosovo, and the principal effect of the NATO bombing campaign against civilian targets in the heart of Europe has been to convince the Europeans that the United States is the latest in a series of imperialist powers who have attempted to dominate the continent: Jacobin and Napoleonic France, Hitler's Germany, Stalin and Brezhnev's Soviet Union.

News of the escalating violence in Kosovo has seeped even into the state-controlled media of the United States, although every few dozen Serbs murdered are usually described as "revenge killings"—as if Serb attacks on Albanians had nothing to do with over a hundred years of Albanian violence and ethnic cleansing. Nearly all of the 350,000 non-Albanians of Kosovo—including Jews, Gypsies, and Muslims—have fled, and "ironically" many of these non-Albanian Muslims have moved into the Serb capital, Belgrade, where they are living unmolested. KFOR Gen. Sir Mike Jackson quickly became exasperated by the behavior of the "victimized" Albanians and has denounced KLA violence in no uncertain terms, and Col. David Hackworth points out that, since the NATO victory, "more Serb civilians have been slaughtered than ethnic Albanians were before the NATO air campaign began." Hackworth has also revealed that NATO's air war left Yugoslavia's military capability virtually intact.

Even Bob Dole—the senator from Tirana whose list of $1,000-plus contrib-

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utors is apparently crowded with Albanian names—has called upon his terrorist/heroin-trafficking buddies to go easy. "The news is filled," Dole confessed in *USA Today*, "with ominous reports of power grabs, town-hall occupations, murderous reprisals, black marketeering, extortion, violent intimidation of Albanians and Serbs alike, and property confiscations by self-appointed Albanian 'commissars' reputedly acting with the knowledge or approval of Hakim Thaci and others among your leaders." It is not the violence and injustice that disturb the ex-senator—that goes without saying—but the risk of losing "support on several fronts."

Senator Dole built his lucrative career by counting on the ignorance and apathy of American voters, few of whom will lose sleep over the rights and wrongs of tribal wars in the Balkans, even when American credibility is at stake. For American businessmen, however, Western Europe is another matter. While the U.S. Air Force was reducing Belgrade and Novi Sad to rubble, *Chronicles* editors made speech after speech and gave countless interviews in which we warned our fellow citizens not to be deceived by public statements made by politicians in the NATO "alliance." Italians, Greeks, and Hungarians were terrified by this exhibition of naked and immoral force, and Germany and France had stepped up discussions for a European defense force, independent of NATO and the United States. "Pooh pooh" was the general response.

Now even Henry Kissinger is catching on. Writing in the *Los Angeles Times*—consistently the best and most independent liberal paper in the United States—Kissinger wonders: "Did Kosovo mark the end of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or at least as we have known it?" Dr. Kissinger is frankly puzzled: "The first joint operation of the alliance, carried out with extraordinary political cohesion and blessed both with apparent success and low allied casualties, has evoked vehement calls for greater European independence." In fact, this past June, the 15 leaders of the European Union committed themselves to the principle of a separate military force that will act independently of both NATO and the United States.

Kissinger goes on to obfuscate the situation by talking about the European force as a tool for reducing European resentments of U.S. power, and he complains about the short-sightedness of European leaders who treat foreign policy as an extension of domestic policy. (How unlike their American counterparts!) The obvious fact, however, eludes him: Many Europeans are scared stiff of the United States, which has been transformed from their protective big brother into the biggest bully in the neighborhood.

The Italians, at least, get the picture. For years, the Italian parties were pawns of their American and Soviet sponsors, and in early September, four retired generals were charged with treason for their part in covering up the 1980 crash of an Italian airliner that may have been shot down by a NATO plane (guess whose) in pursuit of a Libyan jet.

Enough is apparently enough. President Ciampi, celebrating the great NATO victory, told a group of 127 Italian ambassadors that Italy has recovered its pride. Neither NATO nor the United Nations by itself can guarantee the peace of Europe, and a restricted group of major countries all have a part to play. *In altre parole*, Uncle Sam had better watch his step when even the Italian government is recovering its military pride. The war for Clinton's legacy may turn out to be the worst foreign policy blunder in American history.

—*Thomas Fleming*

OBITER DICTA: Renew your passport and join *Chronicles*' editors in Northern Italy May 24-26, 2000, for a three-day conference on Lake Como. America and Italy were forged in civil wars in the 1860's, over-centralized by strongmen in the 1930's, and today face serious challenges from regional and cultural separatists.

Informal discussions and visits to historic sites will complement lectures on Italian politics, history, literature, and opera. We'll arrange meetings with Italian political and intellectual leaders, and we'll try to link up participants with counterparts in their profession. An optional follow-up trip will include some of the most beautiful towns of Northern Italy: Bergamo, Mantova, Ferrara, Parma.

The conference price will include three nights in a luxury hotel on lovely Lake Como, as well as breakfast and dinner. Experience the real Italy, not the Disney version.

Take a cruise out to an island lunch, talk politics and history with Italian and American experts, come face-to-face with a thriving culture where people work hard, make money, and live well. Think of 18th-century lakeside villas, medieval churches, fresh lake fish cooked over an open fire. Call Christopher Check at (815) 964-5811 now, and we won't tell your wife about the silk factory outlet store in Como.

Richard Moore, a poet from Belmont, Massachusetts, has contributed a poem to this issue. Mr. Moore is the author of nine books of poetry, as well as translations of Plautus and Euripides, a book of literary essays, and a novel, *The Investigator*. Mr. Moore gives frequent readings in the Boston area.

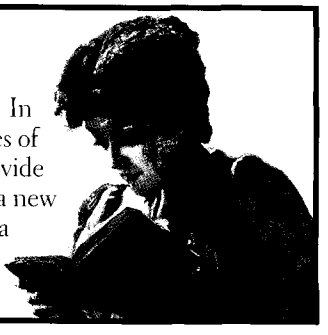
Charles Edward Eaton, who lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, is our second poet. Mr. Eaton is the author of 14 collections of poetry, four volumes of short stories, and a novel, *A Lady of Pleasure*. He is the recipient of the North Carolina Award for Literature.

Our cover artist, Sherry C. Wilson, has lived in Rockford, Illinois, for 25 years but spends a lot of time in Door County, Wisconsin. She is dedicated to the preservation of nine lighthouses on the Door Peninsula. The cover photo is of the North Kewaunee South Pierhead Lighthouse, which was built in 1891.

Our inside illustrations are provided by our art director, **H. Ward Sterett** of Roscoe, Illinois. Mr. Sterett received his B.F.A. from the University of Colorado, his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University, and attended the L'Abri Fellowship, where he studied the effect of Christianity on art.

BOOK OF NEXT MONTH

Next month's book is *Orthodoxy* by G.K. Chesterton. In *Heretics*, G.K. had derided the modernist philosophies of both socialism and the superman. Challenged to provide his own alternative, Chesterton produced, instead of a new system, this restatement of Christian common sense: a must-read for current advocates of socialism, the superman, and the super-race.



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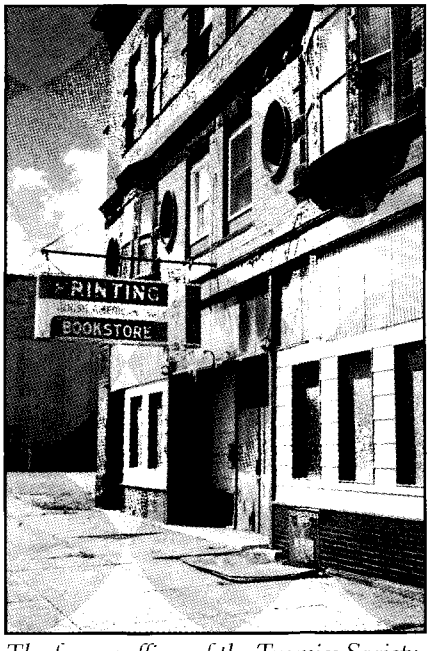

William Mills

The former offices of the Tyomies Society.

Return of the Alien

by Thomas Fleming

"The whole world, without a native home
Is nothing but a prison of larger room."
—Abraham Cowley

His father used to say that the country was good; it was only the people that made it intolerable. Now his father's son was headed up to that north country, where he had not lived for 40 years. He had been back, several times over the years, fishing for trout on the Brule River or trolling for walleye on the Chippewa Flowage. He had visited the desolate city of his birth several times, and once or twice looked up old neighbors or called a school chum, but most of the neighbors were dead, and the chums were off making new lives in the Twins.

No one stayed if he could help it. Once, when he was about ten years old, his mother's brother, a Coast Guard officer, had come to spend a few days.

"My God, Mary, how can you stand this burg?" he asked his sister at the end of the first day. "There's nothing here, and the people . . . " and his uncle went on to talk of the places he had lived—Japan, New Orleans, San Francisco.

Up to that point, he had thought of Superior as one of those cities like Rome or Paris that were known all over the world. With a population of 32,000, Superior covered almost as much ground as Chicago and had the second-largest train yard in the United States. She also had the largest grain elevator, longest iron ore dock, the biggest charcoal briquette plant.

In what other city could a boy walk out the back door of his house and, cutting through a mile of fields where they picked wild strawberries and over hills thick with raspberry bushes, end up in the big woods that led, in one direction, to a sheltered bay of Lake Superior, and, in the other, stretched on endlessly into the great wilderness of the world?

They had spent weekends and sometimes whole weeks at the family's primitive cabin on Lake Nebagamon. Weeks at the lake began with a trip to the ice house on Winter Street, where it was always winter: Huge blocks of ice were pulled out of the sawdust with hooks and tongs and loaded into the back of the black Oldsmobile 98 for the long 30 miles over country roads to the lake.

At least once during the summer, they went fishing with Jake, an Ojibwa fishing guide. Whoever sat next to Jake and did as he was told never failed to catch fish. They took their catch back home to Superior, where Jake would clean and cook the fish. When the boy plagued the guide with his questions, Jake showed him how to make Indian leather out of fish skin, and every time he thought the skin was ready for drying, Jake would say: "No, take it over there and scrape it thinner."

Next morning, his father drove Jake back home, probably to the Lac Court d'Oreilles reservation that runs along the south side of the Chippewa Flowage east of Hayward. Hayward was once a logging town proverbial for its roughness; now it is as sweet and insipid as the "home-made" fudge its residents sell to Illinois tourists, as suburban as Minocqua.

Driving north from Illinois with his friend from Mississippi, into the green-swelling hills of Southern Wisconsin, he remembered how in Douglas County they had looked down on the lower part of the state, where people in Milwaukee or in prosperous farm towns like Monroe grew soft from gentle winters, rich cheese, and easy living. In the Northwoods, men were tough, and even the massive beer bellies that flopped over the bar were ringed in iron.

Wisconsin leads the nation in *per capita* consumption of beer and brandy (though much that goes by that name up there would astonish the inhabitants of Cognac), and the northwestern counties, by his estimation, were the most alcoholic in the state. His sampling methods were admittedly primitive, but a man could easily drink his way into unconsciousness simply by having one drink in every bar within a square mile, and a Douglas County pub crawl might take him from the Anchor on the bad side of Tower Avenue in Superior, up the street to the Elbo Room and the Dugout (next to Frankie's), to the East End and Allouez taverns made famous in the stories of Anthony Bukoski, out to the Kro-Bar and Twin Gables in Brule and down to Finell's and Bridge's in Lake Nebagamon.

From the car window, he watched the black loam of Southern Wisconsin turn into red clay that thinned out, as they drew

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nearer to the lake, into coarse brown sand, good only for growing meadow flowers and trees blasted by the force of the north winds that blew from Canada.

At the end of July, the winds came only from the south, and the people of the North Woods were dying in the 95-degree heat. In Iron River, they stopped at the air-conditioned Java Trout, the only internet/espresso bar north of Minneapolis and east of Brainerd, according to the owners. A reporter from the *Duluth News Tribune* was offended that the owners thought they could make a go of such a place in little Iron River, when there was no internet bar in the Zenith City. There in a nutshell, according to one Wisconsin boy, is what is wrong with Duluth—and Minnesota in general.

At the White Winter Winery housed in the same building, they sampled half a dozen varieties of mead. "An espresso bar and a winery—in Iron River?" he said to the young lady who had set up the business with her husband. "The Green Top restaurant on the highway was the pinnacle of civilization here only five years ago."

She admitted that their friends back in civilization (greater Milwaukee) thought they were crazy. He told her they had driven up to the mouth of the Brule and tried to come down to Iron River by way of Oulu, but the road was closed.

"Oulu? Even when you're in Oulu," she said, "you don't know you're there." Oulu, it seems, is not so much a place as a state of mind. When he was a boy, his family used to visit a Swedish farm family in Cloverland, and their son Jimmy used to brag of riding his Harley over to Oulu on weekends, and ever since he had imagined the Finns carrying out exotic rituals involving saunas and sacrificial virgins. Perhaps it was only a fish-boil.

After the lady vintner and her husband had moved from the civilization of suburban Milwaukee, she decided to run for the school board.

"Someone came to warn me it was not a good idea because there were serious race problems in Iron River. 'Race problems?' I asked. Sure, the Finns and Norwegians can't stand each other."

Jimmy's father Donald (who hunted deer with his old man) was married to a Finn. Don loved Finlander jokes and in the late 60's had taken the exile to the Kro-Bar in Brule (or was it Lyon's Den?) to see the display of a bowsaw with a chain, instead of a blade, and a 3-in-1 can tacked on. The sign read: "Finnish chainsaw wit ta automatic oiler."

Finns settled Oulu, but Russians went to Cornucopia, a fishing and logging village up on the lake, and although the shoreline has been polluted by a handful of *artistes* trading on the quaintness of the place, the old Russian church is still there and gleaming with a fresh coat of paint. If Cornucopia is still comparatively unspoiled, Bayfield is well on the way to becoming another Door County or Lake Geneva, a Mecca for day-sailing yachtsmen who every spring toss aside their Brooks and Saks catalogues and order the summer identikits from Orvis and Land's End. They drove down into Ashland, where Chequamegon Bay had been ruined, like the city of Superior's shoreline, by industrial and commercial development—the generating plant and coal docks competing with motels and gas stations for the ugliness prize.

Lake Superior has been preyed upon in every generation by foreigners: voyageurs who killed the wildlife in search of pelts for Paris fashions, loggers who clear-cut the forests to build houses in Midwestern cities that went from rawness to decay in the lifetime of one old man, fishermen who nearly wiped out the whitefish population to supply the restaurants of Chicago. Like another interloper—the lamprey eel that preyed upon the lake trout—they sucked the juices out of the place and left behind their ugly scars.

In the morning, they headed toward the Brule to check out the water, which was very high. It was also very hot, especially once he had got into his neoprene waders. He was still hot, walking waist deep against the strong current that sweeps past Winneboujou landing. There was no sign of a tricho hatch that morning; nothing broke the water's surface. He tied on a nymph and cast out the line, watching it collapse helplessly in wrinkled coils. It had been two years since he had waded a stream, and subsequent casts were hardly better than the first. He checked the line and found he had missed a ferrule and twisted the line around the rod. He cast again and watched the line shoot out smoothly upstream into a riffle; he mended the ballooning line with a flip of the rod and stripped it in with short nervous jerks. If the trout were impressed, they gave no sign. After an hour or so of stumbling into rocks, he gave it up and peeled off the waders to examine his bruises.

Tired of not catching fish, they drove into Superior, and he tried to get his bearings. The jerry-built VA houses had aged as gracefully as plastic furniture.

"I used to wonder about your dark vision of life," said the Mississippian. "Now I'm amazed at your cheerfulness. What would you have been like if you had stayed here?"

He said he didn't know but pointed out there were two kinds of people in the world: those who belonged somewhere, those who didn't. He thought of them as Earthlings and Martians—one of Bradbury's Martians who can be captured by an Earthling's imagination and appear to be one of them. He was a Martian, he supposed.

"But a Martian could live in a place like this a hundred years without facing much temptation to go native."

When they drove across the bay into Duluth, his Southern friend exclaimed over the neatness of the well-preserved downtown.

"Over in Superior," the Mississippian remarked, "they just sit in the bars and watch the buildings fall down around them."

"Ought to make you feel right at home."

In Billings Park, where he had lived, they stood looking at the bay, stained red by the clay washed in by recent rains. An old man got out of a van with a road map in his hand: "Hot enough for you?" he asked in a good Midwestern dialect and told them he had driven all the way from Florida to escape the heat, "As bad as Florida." Now he was thinking of going farther north. "Stay here," they said. "It's just as hot in Thunder Bay." The exile explained that this kind of weather was impossible so close to Lake Superior. There had been one day of such heat when he was a boy, and it brought on the only tornado in a hundred years. The snowbird looked doubtful and sat down to study his map.

They drove over to Central Park and looked at a gaudily painted house that had been built in the 1890's as a Unitarian church before becoming, in turn, an AME church and a women's club. A few blocks away was a rare example of an octagonal house, a style promoted by Orson Fowler, the pioneering phrenologist from Fishkill, New York. Fowler's obsession with making an efficient use of space blinded him to the obvious disadvantage of his design: No one could figure out how to divide

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the octagon into livable rooms.

Yankees with bright ideas had been prominent in the early settlement of Superior, but Scandinavia had overwhelmed New England. Glenway Wescott lamented the change wrought by immigrants in Southern Wisconsin, but Superior was defined by the foreigners—the French, after all, had been there first, and the border that ran through the Great Lakes was highly porous to the Scots who pushed their way in from Canada.

They stopped at a bookstore on the outskirts of town to look for books by local writers. "It's strange to find a bookstore in Superior," he told the Englishwoman who ran the place. "When I was growing up, people were satisfied with comic books and pulp fiction from Globe News." (He might have added that best-sellers and diet books were no improvement.) She told him that the store was named after the senior editor of the Literary Guild. Beekman had grown up in Superior and attributed his success in picking books to his knowledge of Midwestern women.

Now he knew what had happened to American literature. Superior took it over and replaced Sinclair Lewis and Scott Fitzgerald with James Michener and Tom Clancy.

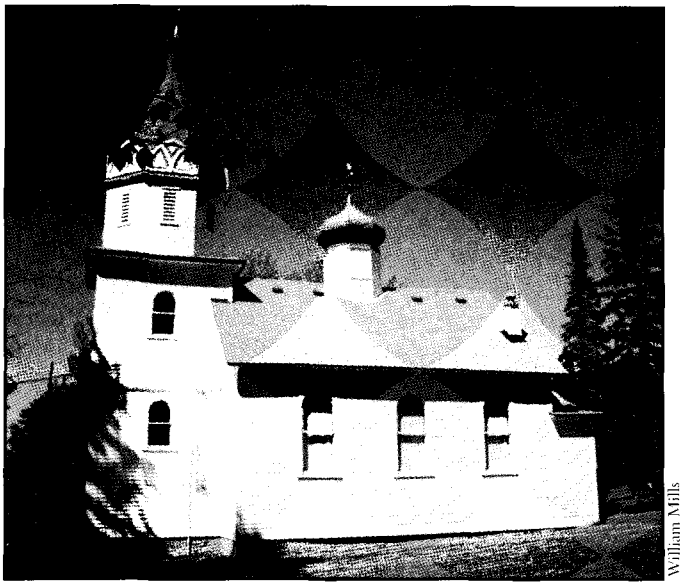
Over lunch in the Elbo Room with a local writer, the conversation turned to regional differences. This part of the country was as different from, say, Illinois as it was from Mississippi. Few local people are aware that a Southerner had been involved in the founding of Superior: in fact, John C. Breckenridge, Lincoln's fire-eating rival in the election of 1860. The Democratic candidate, the pro-Southern Stephen Douglas, also threw his considerable influence behind the project, until his money-grubbing caused a scandal. Illinois is different now: Politicians today are expected to steal.

The writer, who had taught in Louisiana, envied him his life in the Carolinas. Admiration turned to amusement when Rockford entered the conversation. "Jeeze, that's worse than S'perior." Going back to Superior, he had made the best of the situation and turned the Polish neighborhood of the East End and Allouez into a literary landscape. It was his Wessex, his Yoknapatawpha, his Middle Earth.

The alien left the two storytellers drinking their lunch and walked five blocks up Tower Avenue to the offices of the Tyomies Society. He had written a dozen newspapers in Northern Wisconsin and received only two responses: one from JoAn Melchild, who writes for the paper in Shell Lake, and one from the *Finnish American Reporter*, published by the socialist/communist Tyomies Society.

The history of Tyomies is an American saga. The newspaper, which was founded in Massachusetts in 1903 and moved first to Hancock and then in 1913 to Superior, was generally known as the second-largest communist paper in the United States. His seventh-grade art teacher, a rabid anticommunist, spent hours in class denouncing the godless reds of Tyomies, particularly its editor "Mike" Wastila. One day, when the attack on Wastila's character reached a peak, the boy stood up to testify that Wastila was not a proponent of bank robbery and free love, but was in fact a fine man, his father's friend, with a wife and daughter who came frequently to dinner.

Although he had warned the editors that he was, for want of a better term, "conservative," they gave him a warm welcome and a cup of hot coffee to warm him up. Weikko Jarvi, the current editor of the *Finnish American Reporter*, came to Superior from the Iron Range in 1958. He was hired by Wastila, who told him he had a job for five years, but by then the paper would be dead. Finns die hard, apparently.



William Mills

The Russian Orthodox Church in Cornucopia.

In the 20's and 30's, the Society had been instrumental in setting up the first cooperatives, but the movement began to break up over the issue of alignment with the Communist Party. Tyomies was loyal to the party, and they still speak with some contempt for the other side, whom they lump together as Wobblies. (The alien's mother used to say that IWW stood for "I Won't Work.")

Wobblies, socialists, and communists were nothing strange up on the lakes; they were as American as lutefisk and kielbasa. Tom Selinski (not a Finn, but Polish-Slovenian) is making a film on the history of the society. He is bewildered by the Orwellian rewrite of history that demonizes, retroactively, the cooperatives, unions, and leftists as agents of subversion and terror. He blames the "creeping conservatism" of the "trailer court Republicans" who have forgotten their roots. It used to be that when a congressman came to Superior, he spoke at the Labor Temple. Those days are gone.

They are gloomy about the prospects for progressive politics. Thomas Dresel, FAR's sales director, recalls the visitor from the West Coast who bragged about how much better the co-ops in Washington were—not knowing that the whole co-op movement started in Superior. She probably couldn't get tofu or organic peanut butter in a co-op run by farmers and dock workers.

Selinski bristles when the 60's left is brought up to explain why ordinary people turned to the right. "Jerry Rubin wasn't a leftist," he says. "He was just Jerry Rubin." He insists that progressives stand for real family values and defend genuine communities, but when he is challenged on the left's attraction to homosexual rights, he shifts the ground, asking Weikko Jarvi if the Finns weren't always in favor of gay rights. Weikko smiles ironically: "No, I can't say they were."

Getting down to brass tacks, the conservative asks them why they think they can use government to defeat the entrenched interests of wealth and power. After all, those are the people who own the government today, and Weikko concedes, "That is the problem of socialist countries: The masses are too trusting of the leadership."

Superior has changed, they say, and not for the better. Hard-

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ly anyone speaks Finnish any more, and their old neighborhood—the north end of Tower Avenue down to the docks—is dead. Where there had been shops and office buildings, restaurants and dives, there were now only empty spaces and parking lots for nobody to park in. One of the few buildings left standing in the desert of free parking is 314 John, formerly a house of ill repute that sailors had made famous around the world. Up here, they used to say the meanest towns in the world were Hayward, Hurley, and Hell, but Superior from Fifth Street to the harbor was wild enough to make a fourth. It is all gone now, except for Edna's place, which the city fathers have preserved, apparently, as the city's only historical monument.

In the ruins of Superior, the Finns are making an effort to hold on to their heritage: They read the *Kalevala*, write up stories of their immigrant ancestors, make frequent trips to the old country—FinnAir used to fly directly into Duluth. It is a losing battle. Without becoming Anglo-Americans—playing Hamlet in S'perior would be like performing Mozart in a disco—they have lost the language and culture of the old country.

Give them this, he thought as they shook hands and said goodbye, these Finns had kept their faith when most of the American left was jumping on the imperial bandwagon—or should that be paddy wagon? When Weikko was asked what his first political priority was, he answered without hesitation: opposing war.

Left and right meant nothing anymore, the alien tried to explain. Once upon a time in America, liberals made fun of conservatives who went to church and aped T.S. Eliot. Well, Eliot wrote the epitaph on the best of them today: decent, godless people. Not that the left was any better, and truer. He was sick, he said, of red scares—and of black scares, brown scares, and white scares, too. His father had gone out on the town with Joe McCarthy and pronounced him a good fellow whose worst faults were political ambition and an Irish taste for liquor. Compared with Dean Acheson, McCarthy was a great American, but in pursuing the well-worn path to dictatorship of "divide and conquer," both the McCarthyists and their opponents set American against American as surely and deliberately as the English pitted Muslims against Hindus in India.

Any dichotomy will serve, if it nourishes the concentration of power: Finns against Norskis, Anglos against Latinos, African against European, left against right, South against North, labor against business, Catholics against Protestants. As soon as the establishment champions Marxism or feminism or minority rights, the fools on the other side will dutifully respond by burning a cross or calling for white identity politics or setting up anti-defamation leagues to protect Catholics or nominally straight males. Americans will do anything but stay home to mind their own business, rear their own children, and cultivate their own minds. Better to stay in Superior, drinking his way through the long winters, fishing in the spring and hunting in the fall, then ever to get sucked back into worrying about which set of rascals looted the country.

With these melancholy reflections, he walked down Tower Avenue against the hot wind that was being sucked into the changing weather across the lake. He looked up and down the street, trying to summon up impressions from the past, but the effort was futile: It was like a senile husband trying to recognize his wife, thinking, "I might have known someone once, who looked something like this, but she was much younger and prettier." Above the squalid and huddled downtown buildings, the orange sky was ribbed with clouds bumping uncertainly like a slow freight around a curve. The wind was changing, and it would blow up a storm within an hour. He thought of what a sight he must make: The only man in Superior wearing a jacket and tie, with hair and beard blown wild in the wind—like an anarchist under cover.

He found the good old rebels still making merry in the Elbo Room, and for the sake of health and sanity they ordered a pizza. Nursing their drinks as they waited for their food, they listened to the thunder overhead and watched the people, giggling and wet to the skin, bustling in for dinner. More rain meant high water and bad fishing, but it had also broken the back of the heat wave. They repeated the Finlander jokes they had heard, and then moved on to Polish jokes and redneck jokes. When Wisconsin said he was shocked seeing a Southern tribute to "The Good Darky," Mississippi rose to the occasion: "We had our problems, but we had a pretty clean record on the Sioux and the Navaho." When the last ethnic joke is told, there will be five minutes of silence, and then the killing will start. And so it went until late in the evening, swapping insults. Finally, they moved the debate across the street to the Dugout, where the girls were prettier.

"It's sad," he heard somebody say. "In five years they'll be broad in the beam like their mothers. It's a Celtic curse on the Vikings."

They had to leave early (it was now 11:00 P.M.) to fish Big Lake on the Brule the next day. When Calvin Coolidge spent a summer on the Brule, the President kept his office at Central High School, where the returning alien had spent the first semester of ninth grade. He wondered aloud whatever had happened to his English teacher, a pretty young woman 40 years ago, fresh out of college and full of life. It was from her that he had learned that words were more than beads on an abacus marking abstract values, that they were more like reflections on water, hinting at the depths beneath the surface and giving a vision of reality beyond the pool itself. Chemistry had been his first love, because it went to the essences of things. Words went deeper, he found out at the age of 14 and condemned himself to a life of poverty and inconsequence.

When he came to tell her he was moving at the end of the semester, he thought he saw her crying as he walked away, although his memory might have inserted that detail in later years.

The writer, who knew her as he knew virtually everyone in his hometown, said she had been married—her husband died a year or so ago. He rang her up and put him on the telephone.

"Hello, Miss M.," he said like an unwelcome ghost. He would have liked to say that the years melted away but they did not. Forty-odd years lay between, 40 years of encrusted irony and resignation.

"It's so nice when something like this happens," she said.

"You mean when one of your writing students becomes a writer?"

"No, when they remember their teacher."

He walked back to the table and finished his beer. It was time to leave before they all started getting maudlin about old times and new friends. The alien promised to come back for the fall fishing, though he knew that the fishing was only an excuse. They stood to say goodbye and left the Superior native sitting groggy and contented at a table in the middle of the barroom in the heart of the Superior he had made the center of his known universe. c

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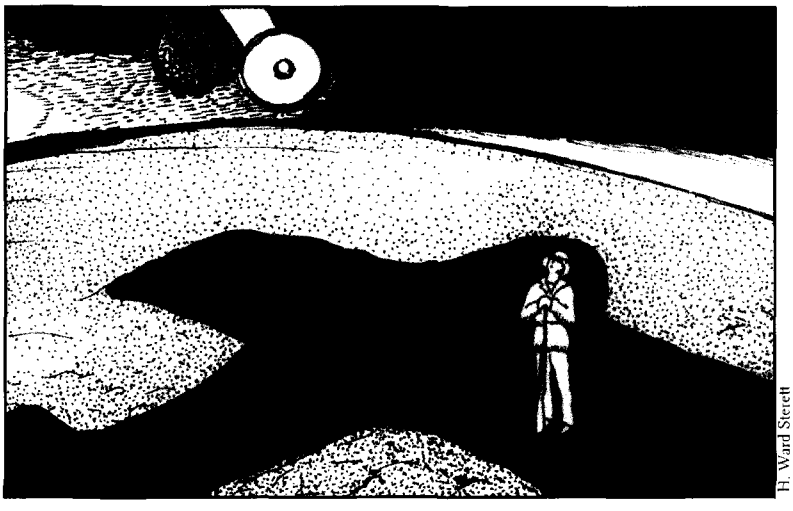
The Other Lindbergh

Crusader Against Plutocracy

by Justin Raimondo



H. Ward Sterett

While the most famous member of the Lindbergh clan is undoubtedly the aviator and World War II-era isolationist Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr., the qualities for which he won renown—his courage, his Scandinavian severity, his willingness to stand against the tide of popular opinion, his dislike of cities and the elites they spawned, and (most of all) his opposition to the scourge of war—were even more concentrated in the person of his father, Charles Augustus Lindbergh, or C.A., as he was known to his family and friends.

Charles Augustus Lindbergh was the son of Swedish homesteaders who hacked a farm out of the Minnesota wilderness. Both the perils and the virtues of that life are dramatized in the story of a run-in that C.A.'s mother, Louisa, had with some "Injuns," among the earliest practitioners of "wilding." Confronted by a group of drunken Sioux banging at the door and demanding food, and with her husband out in the fields, Louisa barricaded herself and her children in the house. The Injuns left, grabbing the ax off the woodpile on their way. Louisa lit out after them—but not before changing into her silk dress so that she might overwhelm the savage miscreants with her dignified appearance. She pursued them down the road quite a distance and upbraided them so thoroughly that the braves were shamed into returning the stolen ax.

And a good thing, too, for the ax had been designed especially for her husband, who had been injured in an accident and could do no work without it. The severity of his injury meant that young C.A. had to take up his responsibilities to the family as soon as he was able, and this meant putting fresh meat on the family table. The man who would take on the Money Trust and the warmongers, who would endure accusations of treason and, eventually, arrest for his outspoken views, spent his youth in solitary contemplation of nature, hunting and traipsing the trails of rural Stearns County. His biographer relates that "no one could remember when Charles could not handle a gun," and young C.A. reveled in the freedom of the hunter. The nonconformism that was to mark his political career was formed in the lone splendor of those woods that swathed the banks of the Sauk River.

What educational opportunities there were in those days came largely as the result of his father's efforts. The first schoolhouse in the area was in a granary donated by August Lindbergh, but his own son did not take kindly to being confined in a classroom, often escaping to the green solitude of the surrounding forests. The real core of C.A.'s education occurred at home: Both of his parents were avid readers, and the family table was the site of much lively intellectual discussion. At the age of 20, he enrolled at the Sauk Centre Academy and Business College, which had no classes, only individual instruction, a method well suited to a young man whose main occupation was still hunting and trapping.

Young Lindbergh's first head-on collision with the world came when the Minnesota legislature passed a law prohibiting the killing of birds for shipment out of state. He had been making a good living shipping barrels of game to a Chicago restaurant. But he had saved most of his profits, and he used this to finance his study of law at the University of Michigan, which he entered in the fall of 1881.

He settled down with his first wife, Mary, in Morrison County, 50 miles from his birthplace, in the town of Little Falls. As a lawyer, C.A. was famous for his honesty; he refused to represent his first potential client because the man was guilty. Among his clients were several local banks and the Pine Tree Lumber Company, and he prospered. But at the tail end of the decade, tragedy overshadowed him: Mary died in 1898 of complications

Justin Raimondo writes from San Francisco.

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following surgery for a tumor. From this point on, his personal life was a cause of great unhappiness. In 1900, he met Evangeline Lodge Land, a temperamental young woman, moody and unpredictable. She was beautiful and a little mad, not at all a suitable mate for the serious intellectual C.A., an austere man not given to emotional displays. After several years of marriage, they lived apart. Turning to books and the world of ideas, C.A. began to develop the political preoccupations that would mark the third phase of his career: Republican insurgent member of Congress representing Minnesota's sixth district.

Lindbergh was, from the beginning, an insurgent Republican, although his views were more in line with those of the Populist Party. In 1906, he ousted the incumbent Republican congressman in a hotly contested primary and went on to beat his Democratic opponent by fewer than 4,000 votes. As the candidate of agrarian revolt against the "special interests"—especially the railroads and big banks—Congressman Lindbergh was the avatar of the Midwestern Republican populism that later evolved into the "isolationist" right of the 30's and 40's. It was a movement on behalf of the farmers, small manufacturers, and small country banks that had been Lindbergh's clients and foremost supporters. Caught between the battling giants of Eastern finance capital, the farmers and small businessmen of the agrarian Midwest—having withstood the vagaries of the weather and the depredations of inebriated Injuns—found themselves confronted by forces that threatened to defeat them.

The panic of 1907, the result of inflationary policies pursued by Treasury Secretary Leslie Shaw, threw many farms into foreclosure and forced small businesses into bankruptcy; it also stimulated a consortium of bankers, in alliance with the Morgan interests, to renew agitation for the creation of a central bank, a lender of last resort backed by the federal government that would attempt to stabilize an inherently unstable banking industry. This drive to centralize the banking system was part of a broader campaign to cartelize the economy, spearheaded by the New York banks in collusion with the railroads, financed and coordinated by J.P. Morgan & Co. Unable to achieve this cartelization in the free market—competition kept springing up, defying the merger-mania of the Morgan interests and keeping prices at a reasonable level—the plutocrats turned to the federal government, establishing the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The movement for a central bank was designed to benefit the big banks at the expense of the small "country bankers," fill the coffers of the Eastern elites and impoverish Midwestern farmers, and build up the great cosmopolitan centers while depopulating the countryside. For years, the Morgan interests and their Wall Street allies, including the rising Rockefeller oil interests, had been agitating for a central bank. Adopting an incremental approach, they enlisted the aid of professional experts and learned commissions. The Aldrich-Vreeland Act, passed by Congress in 1908, increased the amount of "emergency money" that bankers could create out of thin air; in this way, the great Ponzi scheme of fractional reserve banking—in which bankers keep on hand considerably less than 100-percent reserves—was further developed. Another development was the establishment of a National Monetary Commission to "study" the problem of banking "reform" and recommend a course of action—one that was, of course, preordained. The Eastern bankers wanted to knock out the competition from the country banks and simultaneously seize the power to inflate (and deflate) the economy at will, making profits all the way up and all the way down.

In his first major speech to Congress, Lindbergh argued that "speculative parasites" caused the panic of 1907 and perceptively noted that fractional reserve banking is inherently unstable, since "even the guaranty of bank deposits will not prevent panics, but would only defer the day by postponing the hour of fear." The "expert" hirelings of the aspiring cartelists—academics who had studied in Germany and absorbed the Bismarckian conception of the "organic" state, centralized and dominated by a government-business "partnership"—eagerly imported the principles of autocracy and state privilege. The monetary system, they argued, must be organized according to "scientific" principles.

Lindbergh saw through this mumbo-jumbo, arguing that "there is no fixed science about money or credit, except so far as we can evolve it out of experience." The flow of money could not be regulated like the flow of water because "as human nature is not steady, neither is money and credit, for the value of both are more or less seated in the human brain." Value is subjective, conditional, and constantly changing in unpredictable ways; Lindbergh's insight is a concise exposition of the subjectivist theory of value, 30 years before the "Austrian" school of economics came to America.

Not that Lindbergh and his fellow progressive Republicans were giants of economic thought. Some of C.A.'s economic notions—such as the odd idea that the town of Great Falls had far too many businesses, and that this was somehow "inefficient"—reveal a breathtaking ignorance of economics and the market. The positive program of the Populists and their successors, the progressive Republicans—the income tax, government control of "public" utilities, nationalization of the railroads, and (worst of all) various inflationary schemes—ran counter to their instinctual opposition to centralism.

The significance and great strength of the Populist-Progressive movement lay not in its positive program but in its role as an opposition movement, and this was the great attraction of politicians such as Lindbergh and Sen. Robert "Fighting Bob" La Follette: their sharp and insightful analysis of the power elite. Lindbergh's critique of the Aldrich Plan, delivered on the floor of Congress, registers their protest with acumen and verve:

> Wall Street, backed by Morgan, Rockefeller, and others, would control the [Federal] Reserve Association, and those again, backed by all the deposits and disbursements of the United States, and also backed by the deposits of the national banks holding the private funds of the people . . . would be the most wonderful machinery that finite beings could invent to take control of the world.

This machinery, once set in motion, was inexorable, and its sinister purpose soon became apparent to Lindbergh. As war broke out in Europe and the *Lusitania* sank beneath the waves, the hope that the United States might stay out of the carnage went straight to oblivion: Lindbergh wrote in a letter to his daughter Eva that "we are going in as soon as the country can be sufficiently propagandized into the war mania."

While progressives throughout the Midwest opposed the war instinctively, Lindbergh had a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the causes of the coming conflict. In 1915, he published two issues of a magazine, *Real Needs*, in which he indicted the "Money Trust" and the "subsidized" press for schem-

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ing to lure us into the European imbroglio. He pointed out that "the Wall Street end of the Federal Reserve System" was the financial pillar of the Allies: The resources of the U.S. Treasury and depositors' funds were marshaled in the service of the British and French empires. As Murray N. Rothbard put it in *Wall Street, Banks, and American Foreign Policy*, World War I could not have been financed by "the relatively hard-money, gold standard system that existed before 1914. Fortuitously, an institution was established at the end of 1913 that made the loans and war finance possible: the Federal Reserve System." The new machinery of power, once set in place, "enabled the banking system to inflate money and credit, finance loans to the Allies, and float massive deficits once the U.S. entered the war."

As the war hysteria reached new heights and Wilson edged toward intervention, Lindbergh charged that "invisible organizers" had "buncoed" the American people on the war question. But they were not invisible to the congressman from Minnesota: "Amid all this confusion the lords of special privilege stand serene in their selfish glee, coining billions of profit from the rage of war. They coldly register every volley of artillery, every act of violent aggression, as a profit on their war stock and war contracts." The "dollar plutocracy," not the Kaiser, was "the greatest foe of humanity."

In 1916, as it became clear that America soon would enter the war, Lindbergh announced his candidacy for the U.S. Senate: He wanted a wider audience for his views. His opponent, Frank Kellogg, a former St. Paul lawyer and nationally famous "trust-buster" during the reign of Teddy Roosevelt, made military "preparedness" the main issue of the campaign. As the war fever hit new highs, Lindbergh was clearly on the defensive, yet unwavering in his insistence that although he favored "safe and sane preparedness against unfriendly nations if they attack us," he opposed "turning our country into a military camp."

But the militarization of America was already half-achieved, and Lindbergh's voice was raised in vain: He came in last in a four-way race, and returned to Washington a lame-duck congressman. Still, he was not silenced. The plutocrats, he charged, were behind the militarization effort: America's expanded army and navy would be used in "wars of conquest," not self-defense. He introduced a resolution in the House calling for a negotiated settlement of the European war. But all hopes of such a peace vanished on January 31, 1917, when President Wilson severed diplomatic relations with Germany.

Despondent yet defiant, Lindbergh bitterly denounced the Wilsonians to his fellow Progressives. "There isn't any such thing as a war for democracy," he argued. But would not war result in more government action, asked a friend, and more progressive reform? Lindbergh's telling reply was that "war-born things" are inherently flawed. Prefiguring the rise of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, he prophesied that war would have to mean that "dictators will spring up, perhaps even here."

The infamous Zimmerman note, which raised the unlikely specter of a Teutonic Mexico, had the war party frothing at the mouth. The House voted, 403 to 14, to arm American merchant ships. Of the 14 dissenters, Lindbergh was the most caustic: Although plenty of Americans had been killed on belligerent ships and neutral ships prior to the current crisis, he pointed out that "no action toward starting war was taken till the submarine warfare stopped the munitions makers sending their goods across the ocean."

He knew who his enemies were: J.P. Morgan & Co. was massively invested in financing the export of munitions and other war materials to the Allies. In a final dramatic gesture of defiance, Lindbergh's last act in Congress was to introduce articles of impeachment against five members of the Federal Reserve Board, all Morgan men, charging them with "high crimes and misdemeanors" and "conspiracy to violate the Constitution and the laws of the land."

The outbreak of repression and hysterical witch-hunting that followed the declaration of war turned America into a virtual police state. The Espionage and Sedition Acts criminalized antiwar speech and led to a wave of arrests: D.T. Blodgett of Iowa was sentenced to 20 years in jail for urging his neighbors not to reelect members of Congress who voted for conscription, while Kate Richards O'Hare of Missouri was given five years for complaining that "the women of the United States are nothing more or less than brood-sows, to raise children to get into the army and be turned into fertilizer." Around 2,000 Americans were prosecuted for violating the Espionage Act: Almost half were convicted, of which 70 were given ten years and at least 30 condemned to prison for 20 years. The repression was particularly harsh in Lindbergh's home state of Minnesota. Citing the Minnesota Espionage Act, local prosecutors jailed someone who casually remarked to a woman who was knitting: "No soldier ever sees these socks."

It was the nadir of American liberty, a time when Beethoven's music was banned in Pittsburgh and Goethe and Nietzsche were withdrawn from library stacks. The Committee on Public Instruction, a government agency, turned the intellectual elites into the priesthood of the war god: Writers, economists, historians, and academics of every sort were mobilized into an army of propagandists which "instructed" the American people in the myth of German war guilt. In Nevada, a local Council of Defense held a "people's trial" and found the local nonconformist guilty of "lukewarmness toward the cause of the United States and their allies," a "crime" for which he was duly tarred and feathered. In many states, including Minnesota, such groups had official status as the "Commission on Public Safety," and they practically ran the state. The Minnesota antiwar agitator who declared that "we are going over to Europe to make the world safe for democracy, but I tell you we had better make America safe for democracy first" was arrested by order of the commission, and his conviction was upheld by the Supreme Court on the grounds that "every word he uttered in denunciation of the war was false," and "it would be a travesty on the constitutional privilege [of free speech] to assign him its protection." A small-town Minnesota newspaper editor was attacked and his presses destroyed because he was not sufficiently critical of the Non-Partisan League, a group of farmers whose muscular antiwar stance made them the target of jingoes throughout the Midwest.

Lindbergh had always been a party insurgent, loyal to his conscience rather than the leadership, and his final break with the GOP was telegraphed near the end of his congressional career, as he stood on the floor of the House in the summer of 1916 and declared: "The plain truth is that neither of these great parties, as at present led and manipulated by an invisible government, is fit to manage the destinies of a great people."

Upon his return to Minnesota, he made common cause with a rapidly growing agrarian protest movement that had its main strength in the upper Midwest—and was just beginning to feel the first hammer blows of government repression. Founded in North Dakota in 1915, the Non-Partisan League was an associ-

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ation of some 200,000 farmers who were imbued with a radical distrust of the reigning elites and desperate to maintain their way of life against the rising tide of war and state-privileged industrialism. Lindbergh chose the NPL as his vehicle of protest. In a letter to Eva, C.A. brushed aside her concerns about his new relationship with the League and stood by his decision to throw his lot in with notorious radicals: "I am a radical because I oppose the few and stand for the masses."

At a Minnesota NPL rally, Senator La Follette answered a heckler's question about the *Lusitania* by making the trenchant point that Wilson's own secretary of state had implored the President to stop Americans from setting foot on that doomed ship. The Minnesota Commission on Public Safety, created in April 1917 and armed with sweeping powers to stifle dissent, demanded La Follette's expulsion from the Senate, and NPL President Arthur Townley was hauled before a secret tribunal and questioned about the League's activities. The NPL was under constant surveillance by state officials.

It was under these circumstances that Lindbergh accepted the nomination of the Non-Partisan League for governor. Republican Gov. J.A. Burnquist declared that he would not campaign because war-time was no time for politics: In Minnesota, he declared, there were only two parties, "loyalists and disloyalists." In reality, of course, Burnquist waged a very active campaign, addressing meetings of "loyalists" sponsored by the Commission on Public Safety and printing campaign literature at taxpayers' expense. The smear campaign launched by the Burnquist camp and supported by the local and national media was even more acrimonious and far more dangerous for C.A. than a similar one would be for his famous aviator son when he was a leader of the anti-interventionist America First Committee on the eve of World War II.

The concerted press attack on Lindbergh focused on his book, *Why Is Your Country At War?* The book named names, fingering such lords of high finance as Morgan and Kuhn-Loeb, key members of the "inner circle" that had "adroitly maneuvered" the country into war. The *New York Times* disdained Lindbergh as "a sort of Gopher Bolshevik" and equated with treason his "animus" against the plutocrats in that paper's hometown. During hearings before the Senate Military Affairs Committee, warhawk Senators James A. Reed of Missouri and John W. Weeks of Massachusetts read portions of Lindbergh's searing indictment of "the intrigues of speculators" who had "dragged us into the war," hectoring the witness, NPL chief Townley, on whether he agreed. The hysteria climaxed in the government seizure of the book and the destruction of the plates by government agents in the spring of 1918.

The demonization of Lindbergh in the press was the backdrop of a wide-ranging campaign of government repression directed at his gubernatorial campaign: The Public Safety gangs and anti-League judges banned NPL meetings in 19 counties. NPL organizers were arrested, and a reign of terror was unleashed on the membership. Subjected to a torrent of personal abuse on the campaign trail—run out of town, pelted with rotten eggs, hanged in effigy, and prevented from speaking in Duluth and towns throughout the state—Lindbergh did not relent. Addressing an audience of 10,000 farmers at Osakis, he declared that the war profiteers were "the real disloyalists," for "even the pro-German in our midst is actuated by a mistaken sentiment for his fatherland, but these scoundrels, who stab our boys in the back, are moved by selfishness alone." Campaigning with Rep. John Baer in Rock County, near the South Dakota and Iowa borders, Lindbergh and his campaign caravan were showered by a volley of shotgun blasts, aimed first into the air and then at the car. As the car pulled away, Baer scrambled to the floor, but Lindbergh sat up straight as an arrow and told the driver, "Don't drive so fast, Gunny, they will think we are scared."

Nine days before the election, Lindbergh was arrested in Martin County on a charge of "conspiracy" for conducting an election meeting. One hundred "volunteer guards" had been mobilized by state authorities, and they seized Lindbergh and hauled him into court. He was briefly detained, and the charges were quickly dropped, but the intent of the Burnquist forces to criminalize the opposition had all but succeeded. Burnquist's victory at the polls—199,325 votes to Lindbergh's 150,626—did not put an end to the controversy. The aftermath of the election proved nearly as stormy as the campaign.

Through the intervention of George Creel, a friend of the Progressives in the administration, Lindbergh was appointed to a seat on the War Industries Board. A national uproar ensued, and the chorus of outrage was echoed in a *Minneapolis Tribune* headline: "Capital Stunned Over Mystery of Lindbergh Berth." The intellectual vigilantes of war-time America made short work of Lindbergh's naive belief that he could serve with honor in the war effort—just as they would scotch a similar attempt by his son to secure a military commission after Pearl Harbor.

Lindbergh's political activities now revolved around the nascent Farmer-Labor Party, not only as a candidate but as a party officer and theoretician. He started a new journalistic venture, *Lindbergh's National Farmer*, and came out with a book, *The Economic Pinch*, in which he developed the themes that had been the *leitmotiv* of his political career: the evil of the trusts, the privileged status of the banks, and the responsibility of the plutocracy for the war. Society could be divided into four classes: farmers, wage workers, entrepreneurs, and "profiteers." The first three were useful and necessary to the workings of the national economy; the fourth was a parasite that lived by exploiting the others. In comparing our own plutocrats to the European aristocrats of the last century, Lindbergh warned that the Morgans could meet the same fate as the Bourbons.

A campaign for his old congressional seat went down to defeat, and yet another gubernatorial campaign ended when he suddenly fell ill and had to withdraw. Diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor, he died on May 24, 1924.

C.A. Lindbergh understood who were the bad guys, and he was not afraid to name names. He saw through the illusion of American capitalism as a free, competitive system: He viewed it as a rigged game in which a few insiders load the dice and amend the rules at their pleasure. With a kind of X-ray vision, he homed in on the central scam of modern times, the Federal Reserve System, and recognized that the consolidation of central banking would mean the ultimate triumph of plutocracy over liberty and the defeat of the agrarian Midwest at the hands of Eastern cosmopolites. American freemen would become industrial slaves. He saw, too, that this private consortium of bankers, vested with the power to control the money supply, was a mighty financial machine perfectly designed to wage war.

Lindbergh knew what he was up against, but as he wrote to his daughter after his arrest as a seditionist, "this thing is bigger than anyone's life, and I am not so cowardly as to be afraid for myself."

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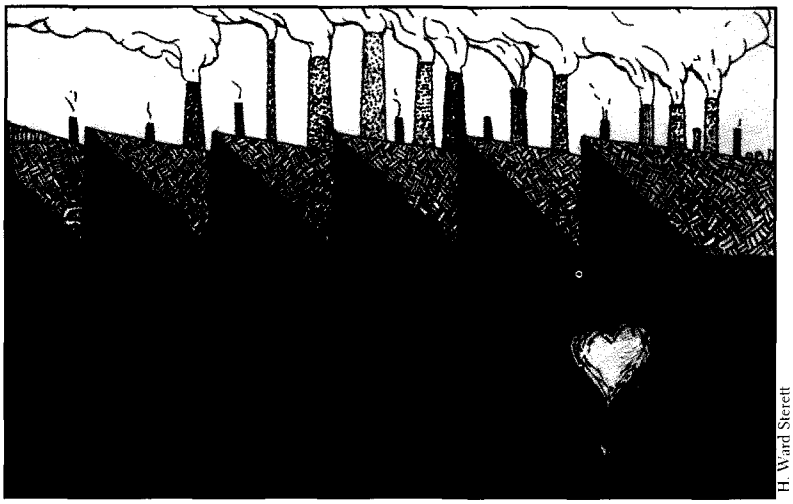
Downsizing Detroit

Motown's Lament

by Greg Kaza



H. Ward Sterett

Detroiters have a deeply ironic way of looking at their beloved city. The irony is evident in a once-popular T-shirt that showed a muscular tough gripping a ferocious dog around the neck while holding a loaded gun to the animal's head. "Say Nice Things About Detroit," the T-shirt read. The T-shirt is a commentary on Detroit's international reputation as a rough working-class industrial town where cars are built and more than one dispute has been settled with fisticuffs.

Detroit came of age in the 20th century as a city of struggle. Two in particular have withstood history's test. The Battle of the Overpass took place in 1937 in nearby Dearborn, pitting Henry Ford's security chief Harry Bennett and his goons against Walter P. Reuther, Richard Frankensteen, and organizers from the nascent United Automobile Workers (UAW). The battle ended in bloodshed and a social contract, largely forgotten by today's yuppie journalists, that dramatically improved the economic lives of millions of working-class Americans for two generations. The UAW agreed to supply the automobile companies with labor; in exchange, the auto companies provided union members with salaries decent enough to afford a middle-class existence.

The Riot of 1967, an urban uprising of the poor, produced a sadder ending. Forty-three people were killed in five days of the most costly rioting, at the time, in U.S. history. As Paige St. John wrote in a recent piece for the *Sunday Journal*, a weekly produced by striking workers at Detroit's two dailies, the *Free Press* (Knight-Ridder) and *News* (Gannett), Detroit's white liberal mayor, Jerome P. Cavanagh, "had told America that he could weave a net of social programs that would not just catch but uplift the urban poor. The Kennedy administration financed it. America believed it. Cavanagh's strong Irish face shone on the inside pages of *Newsweek* and on the cover of *Look* magazine." As riots flared in other cities, Cavanagh thought Detroit would be spared. After all, Detroit was the town where Bobby Kennedy rode in an open-air convertible, shaking the hands of the urban poor, an image caught in a memorable photo that seemed to offer so much hope. Yet there it was, burning before the world for three days while crafty President Lyndon Baines Johnson delayed Michigan Governor George Romney's request for federal troops. Cavanagh's son Mark, today a judge, believes Johnson used the riots to puncture Romney's hopes for the Republican presidential nomination. He is not alone.

But there is a deeper irony at work in "Say Nice Things About Detroit." The slogan was coined by a local suburban shopkeeper and civic booster, Emily Gail, who later moved to Hawaii. *News* columnist Pete Waldmeir, the closest thing Detroit has to a Mike Royko-style journalist, had a different suggestion: "I'm talking about settling on a new slogan for Detroit—something catchy that folks from around the country and the world will immediately identify with my hometown." Waldmeir writes:

> New York is the Big Apple. Chicago is the Windy City. New Orleans is the Big Easy and Philadelphia's the City of Brotherly Love. . . . Even European cities have identifying monikers. Paris, for instance, is the City of Lights; Rome is the Eternal City . . . Detroit, alas, has had many different tags hung on it over the years . . . Motor City . . .

Greg Kaza is a retired Michigan state representative.

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Arsenal of Democracy . . . Motown . . . Murder City . . .
Too many of the bad ones have stuck.

"My personal candidate?" Waldmeir writes. "For years I've proudly worn a T-shirt that says all I have to say: 'Detroit: No place for wimps.'"

Detroit *is* no place for wimps. For most of the 20th century, its reputation has been as the tough, working-class town of *Hard Times* or *Hoffa*. Ford's Rouge complex, where the Battle of the Overpass took place, is still one of the largest industrial facilities in the world. Suburban Downriver is one of the most heavily industrialized areas in the United States. From atop the Rouge River bridge, you can see the Rouge complex to the north; to the south are Downriver's auto plants and steel mills, some now shut down as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement. But the view cannot match the pungent odor that assaults one's nostrils on hot summer days, a chemical mélange that sometimes smells like rotten eggs.

The irony of Detroit is reflected in the way area residents identify with the city, whether they live in it or the suburbs. Some suburbanites answer "Detroit" when they are out of town and asked their place of origin. There is a pride associated with the Detroit of automobiles and Motown Records, whose performers gave the world so many chart-topping hits before moving to Los Angeles in the early 1970's. But when they are back in Southeast Michigan, the answer of these suburbanites is more likely to be "Birmingham," "Dearborn," or "Livonia." There is only shame for the Detroit of Murder City fame, of streetlights that do not work and snow-covered streets that went uncleaned during last year's international auto show. And bitter memories of the Detroit of Israeli author Ze'ev Chafets' book, *Devil's Night*, which told the world about the tradition, since ended, of wholesale arson on the night before Halloween. Or the Detroit analyzed by New York's leftist *Village Voice* under titles such as "Motor City Breakdown" or "New Jack City Eats Its Young." Some of the most honest coverage of Detroit's problems has been written not by native or transplanted liberals but by outsiders with a left-of-center perspective. The same holds true for the auto industry; it was ex-*New York Times* reporter David Halberstam who wrote *The Reckoning*, which documented how Ford responded to Japanese penetration of U.S. auto markets.

Suburbanites' love-hate relationship with Detroit is not lost on the city's black population, which exceeds 75 percent. To black Detroiters, it is rank hypocrisy for white suburbanites to identify with the city when outside of Michigan while disowning it locally. This is only one divide separating Detroit from the suburbs. Within Detroit, the late Coleman Young, elected in 1973 as the city's first black mayor, is viewed reverently; in the suburbs, he remains anathema. And no wonder: Shortly after taking office, the former civil-rights activist told Detroit's criminals to "hit Eight Mile Road," the boundary between the city and its northern suburbs. Young served as mayor for 20 years; his tenure proved the old saw that "politics makes for strange bedfellows." Supported by the Communist Party, he worked with Henry Ford II to build the Renaissance Center, a major commercial development downtown. A Democrat, Young nevertheless enjoyed a closer working relationship with two Republican governors (William Milliken and John Engler) than with his fellow Democrat, Governor James Blanchard. In 1993, Young's tenure ended with the election of black Detroit attorney (and former chief justice of the Michigan Supreme Court) Dennis Archer, attacked by opponents as the candidate of the white suburbs. Conventional wisdom is that Archer ushered in a new era. But the problems of Detroit, whether city or suburb, are more complicated and desperate than its three million metropolitan residents have been led to believe. They are rooted in international trade and the cold hard reality of the economic principle known as Factor Price Equalization (FPE).

"There prevails on the whole earth a tendency toward an equalization of wage rates for the same kind of labor," wrote Ludwig von Mises. The Austrian economist Mises escaped the Nazis but not the stigma of being a non-Keynesian in the groves of post-World War II academe in America. But the small group of students he influenced included Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, who peppers his congressional testimony today with terms straight out of Mises' magnum opus, *Human Action*.

What Mises described with FPE was the tendency of the prices of wages and other factors (such as land and capital) to equalize when government-imposed barriers to international free trade are ended. Investment from across the world will move to the nation offering the highest rate of return to investors. In the case of NAFTA, there are skilled and unskilled workers in both the United States and Mexico employed by the automobile industry and its suppliers. Capital will flow into the sectors offering the greatest return to investors (U.S. skilled and Mexican *unskilled* labor) and out of those sectors providing a lower rate (Mexican skilled and U.S. *unskilled* labor). Consumers ultimately benefit, but there are clear winners and losers under this process. If you are a $50-per-hour American computer geek or a $5-per-day Mexican blue-collar worker, capital will flow your way because your work provides the greatest return to investors in the global economy. But investors in Mexican skilled and U.S. unskilled labor also want a higher rate of return, and to achieve this, they must spur productivity increases, generally with technological advancements—or worse. Corporations must downsize, outsource, or send native jobs to a foreign land. Unskilled American blue-collar workers end up the biggest losers.

What is to become of the Motor City, the once-great Arsenal of Democracy, the industrial titan that defeated the Nazis in World War II?

Manufacturing jobs, especially for unskilled workers, have been disappearing from Detroit's auto industry because of the emerging global economy and FPE. General Motors, the largest automaker, has eliminated more than 250,000 jobs in two decades. Ford announced a major change of strategy in July (outsourcing to Brazil) and has also been trimming jobs. The process was already well under way at Chrysler before it was swallowed by foreign investors and became Daimler-Chrysler; now, only about 25 percent of its shareholders are American. The process is just beginning. As more international trade agreements are concluded, FPE will kick in with a vengeance,

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someday incorporating lower-wage nations such as India and China with their several billion inhabitants.

What is to become of the Motor City, the once-great Arsenal of Democracy, the industrial titan that defeated the Nazis in World War II?

What occurred in Detroit during World War II was remarkable, although it has been largely forgotten today by the younger generation. In December 1940, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared in a fireside chat that America "must be the great Arsenal of Democracy." At the time, FDR was talking about planes, boats, arms, and munitions. War. And it was war, not FDR's New Deal or Keynesian economics, that brought an end to the Great Depression.

When the war began, Detroit's auto companies, in alliance with the UAW, converted their peacetime plants into war-time factories that churned out tanks, aircraft engines, boats, cannons, even airplane tires. At its height, Ford's Willow Run Plant near Ypsilanti produced one twin-tailed B-24 Liberator airplane *every hour*. Women played a key role in war-time production; Rosie the Riveter filled Detroit's defense plants. Michigan had only two percent of the U.S. population but was producing more than ten percent of the nation's war goods. If the Nazis could have bombed Detroit, they would have. "Detroit," Joseph Stalin once quipped to FDR, was "winning the war."

Those glory days are gone. A three-tier economic system is being created today in Detroit, although the process is slow and not easily discernible.

First, there is the white-collar suburban entrepreneurial and managerial class, including high-tech engineers, computer code writers, and those of us who live by words, symbols, and images in the Information Age. Second, there is the urban underclass, situated primarily in Detroit itself. Then there is the third group: the invisible blue-collar workers whose families were the main beneficiaries of the social contract between the auto companies and the UAW. For most of the 20th century, their manufacturing jobs brought the promise of a modest house, a car or two, braces, and maybe college someday for the kids, along with a small cottage on a lake "up north." Real *per capita* income has grown in recent years for the first group but fallen for the latter two. The underclass never had a middle-class lifestyle; the invisible third group is losing it. Increasingly, it is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve middle-class status without significant personal debt. Many families in this group are not living beyond their means because they want to; they are assuming large debt burdens to survive.

Free-market conservatives and libertarians contend that international free trade leads to greater economic efficiencies and consumer choice. At their basest level, free traders resort to Social Darwinism. "If some autoworker in his 40's with a wife and three kids is laid off," a 20-something New York neoconservative told me recently, "that's his problem, not the country's. He should learn how to use the computer!" Savvier free traders acknowledge the social cost of middle-age families surviving on three or four service-sector jobs after downsizing. "It's a very real problem," a conservative ex-Federal Reserve economist confided. But they offer few answers other than job retraining and more education. Nor do they need to. The free traders are winning the public-policy debate; Bill Clinton, a *Democrat*, signed NAFTA, and more international free-trade agreements are likely to occur.

The U.S. economy is about to set a record for consecutive months of economic expansion. There is talk on Wall Street of a "New Economic Paradigm" that has repealed the business cycle. But surface appearances can be deceiving. The auto industry is cyclical by nature, as those of us who grew up with it know. (My father worked 43 years building engines at Chrysler.) Eventually a recession will occur, and Detroit will lose more manufacturing jobs. The dynamic of capitalism is more powerful than commonly understood. Joseph Schumpeter called it "creative destruction." One could also describe it as the "downsized autoworker's lament."

Politics has its limits. In the 1995-96 session of the Michigan House of Representatives, I served as Republican chair of the Urban Policy Committee. "Don't take it," a senior colleague from a rural Republican district told me when I was offered the post. "They [the leadership] want you to fail." This paranoia was matched by the cynicism of a Democratic colleague. "Republican urban policy," he told me, "is a contradiction in terms." Despite the challenges, we were able to forge a bipartisan coalition and approve an interesting piece of Republican legislation creating tax-free "Renaissance Zones" in depressed urban areas of Detroit.

Now Detroit provides two contrasting political urban policies: Governor Engler's Renaissance Zones and federal Empowerment Zones, championed by President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore. "By creating . . . new zones in America's urban and rural communities," Gore declared in April, "we will bring the spark of private investment to the communities that need them the most—and we will spread the lessons of community empowerment across the country." Empowerment Zones allow distressed communities like Detroit to use "targeted federal benefits as part of a strategic revitalization plan to encourage significant new private investment and job creating opportunities within these areas." In Detroit, more than two billion dollars in private-sector financial and technical assistance commitments have been pledged. But serious problems have emerged. Last November, federal auditors found the agency in charge of Detroit's Empowerment Zone had overstated its accomplishments and failed to notice when tax dollars were incorrectly spent outside the district. Anyone with the time to dig deeper will find that a majority of the top "economic development" projects in Detroit are not legitimate private-sector investments but government action that tries to leverage taxpayer money, including $172 million for "demolition and renovation" work by the Detroit Housing Council at two government housing projects.

Detroit's failing public schools, taken over by the state earlier this year, provide one more ironic twist. In recent decades, even militant free traders have been forced to acknowledge that the distribution of earnings reflects the distribution of formal education. The gap between the well-educated and the not-so-well-educated is growing. Real median family income in the United States doubled from the end of World War II to the recession of the mid-1970's. But the real standard of living for those without a college degree has steadily and sharply declined since that time. The picture is even bleaker for those without a high-school diploma. A lifetime of economic desperation is all but certain for those dropping out of Detroit's public schools. It has not always been this way. For much of the post-World War II era, high-school graduates and even dropouts were able to find the unskilled auto and steel jobs that provided a middle-class lifestyle. The irony? Today, their unskilled counterparts in Mexico, Brazil, and Asia still can. c

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Reactionary Radicals

RADICAL REACTIONARIES

The Militia of Love

A Visit With Novelist Carolyn Chute

by **Bill Kauffman**

Carolyn Chute's return address includes the postscript, "No Fax/No Phone/No Paved Road." The self-taught novelist of Maine's backwoods can add "No More Good Reviews," for with her latest book, *Snow Man*, she has committed an unpardonable act of literary patriotism: She depicts a militiaman as a human being.

We came to Chute's Parsonsfield from Concord, Massachusetts, where our daughter plunked imaginary redcoats on the rude bridge that arched the flood. (Two hundred years ago, New England had use of militiamen.) We were borne, not on the night wind of the past, but on the ribboned highways of the present. The McDonald's we passed in Westbrook was selling a Lobster Value Meal—who says there's no place for regional cuisine under global capitalism?—but not for nothing has Maine been relegated to the far corner of the country: Vandals keep throwing rocks through the window of the Starbucks in Portland. Some people just have no respect for private property.

The German and Swedish cars that hum along the Maine coast give way, the further inland one goes, to pickups, until our green Lumina starts to look suspiciously hoity-toity. Carolyn's hand-drawn map, with such landmarks as "Big old place" and "old trees," is a cartographic masterpiece, as for once we make no wrong turns.

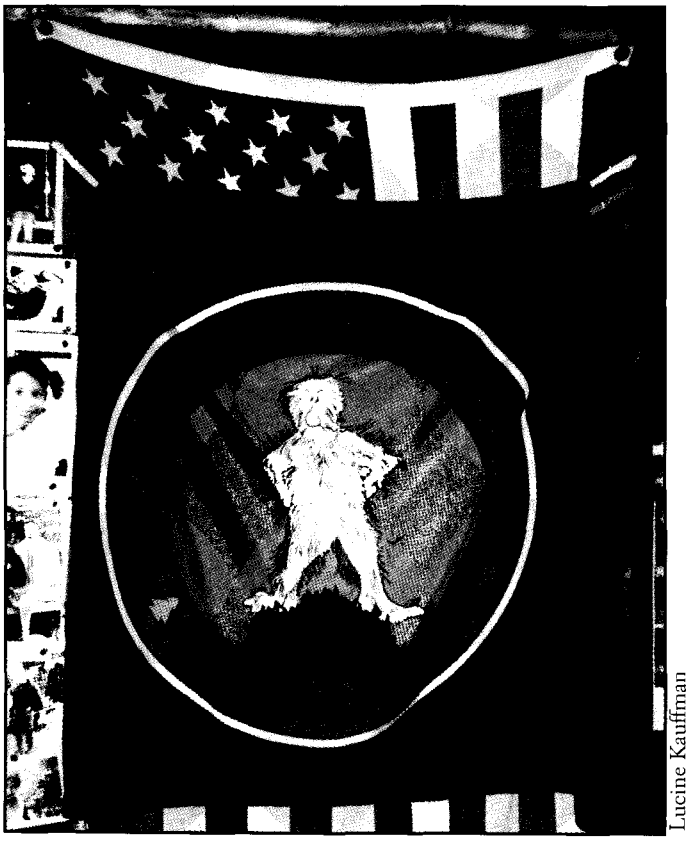
We find her dirt road near the Maine-New Hampshire border. She has posted a speed limit of 3.5 miles per hour on the rutted path that leads to the wooden frame home, set amid 17 hilly wooded acres, that the 1985 best-seller *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*, bought for Carolyn and her husband, Michael.

Michael greets us at the door, standing at attention, cradling a reproduction Brown Bess. He is artillery commander of the Border Mountain Militia; our daughter thrills to the sight of this Revolutionary War ghost.

Michael has a ZZ Top-quality beard and a soft Maine drawl. He mows and tends the town's gravesites, filled with the bones of his ancestors and relatives. His people have been here since 1830; "this town is all related to him," says Carolyn. Michael is eight years younger than Carolyn, but she calls him "Pa." She first saw him at a turkey shoot in Sebago. He cannot read, so she reads her work aloud to him. This is natural: "Home is work in common," Carolyn says. "Home is life in common."

There is a dreary sub-genre of regional writing by professorettes who move to college towns and see the hirsute and saggy locals lolloping along Main Street and crank out novels in which they imagine the squalid lives of loutish husbands and victimized wives and feral children, one of whom may score well on the SATs and escape Boggy Creek for the faculty lounge. Carolyn Chute is not one of those. She is the real thing: a Maine girl who married a Maine boy and would no more betray Maine than she would turn over her guns to the Proper Authorities.

Carolyn is an inveterate scrawler and sign-maker: Tables and walls and the refrigerator are blazoned with such messages as "School Stinks" and "Neo-Isolationist and Proud of It." Draped over the Stars and Stripes is the Border Mountain Militia flag, designed by Carolyn and bearing the image of the Abominable Hairy Patriot. ("The Indians believed that in terrible times, a big hairy guy would come and warn the people.") She rocks steadily, laughs readily; we sit in the chairs usually occupied by her four Scottish terriers.



Lucine Kauffman

The flag of the Border Mountain Militia.

Bill Kauffman is the author, most recently, of With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America *(Praeger).*

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Carolyn was raised in Cape Elizabeth, on the coast, before "the professional people came in and it got built up." She uses "professional people" as a pejorative, for the invaders inevitably corrupt "what I like about small towns: You had a relationship."

"Even the person in town you don't get along with, you hate, you always wave to him," interjects Michael. "You might be stuck in a snowbank sometime, and he'll pull you out."

No one is going to pull Carolyn out of the critical hole which *Snow Man*, her fourth novel, has dug her. She is buried under enough scorn and obloquy to suffocate a weaker woman. And all because she loves her neighbors and her country.

Snow Man follows Robert Drummond, a hairy and occasionally abominable patriot, a Maine militiaman who is between assassinations, as it were: He has just executed one U.S. senator from Massachusetts and would be drawing a bead on the other were it not for the gunshot wound to his shoulder administered by Boston police. Robert is taken in by a sympathetic handyman on the estate of his intended second target, Sen. Jerry Creighton, who is known as "the Liberal, which means he works hard for the rights of blacks and gays and women and foreigners who have graduated from Harvard . . . or Yale . . . and he works *hard* for the rights of Big Business, as does the rest of Congress."

Robert will be nursed, in ways medical and otherwise, by Creighton's daughter, an "angry, rivalrous ultrafeminist," and his Beacon Hill wife. The novel is about "what happens when the 'left' and the 'right' come together, heart to heart," writes Chute, who dedicates it to, among others, Noam Chomsky and the 2nd Maine and Border Mountain militias.

Chute opens *Snow Man* with a brief scene that rings so true you half expect the novel to be interrupted while the author is issued a citation for having a Hate Thought. In a Boston barroom decidedly not that presided over by Ted Danson, cheers go up as the first senator's assassination is reported on TV. "Get 'em all!" is the general sentiment, though one patron cautions the celebrants to "Watch out. I heard of a guy who was arrested and put away for saying that kinda thing. An' he was just a poor old retarded guy almost eighty years old."

"This is America. I speak my mind," replies one bold patron. To which Chute appends, "In barrooms and living rooms and dooryards and workplaces all over America, people discuss the senator's demise, followed by awkward discussions of the dangers of speaking one's mind." It is a lesson that Carolyn Chute, heretofore a critics' darling, is learning with a vengeance.

"With all my other books I got jillions of interviews," she says. But with *Snow Man*, published in May, "they won't interview me. And I don't think it's that much more poorly written." The folks at Harcourt Brace tell her it's "controversial," to which she replies, "It can't be controversial if it's blacked out!"

Snow Man's assumption that militias are not splatball clubs for homicidal rural losers but rather indigenous expressions of hearty patriotism has, perhaps, kept Michiko Kakutani from embracing the novel. But Chute's disparagement of corporate-ladder feminism is what really seems to irk reviewers. The flunky in the *New York Times* singled out the passage in which Drummond explodes, "the big-boy f----- in the White House and his arrogant bitch broad femmie-Ms. wifey and the banker boys eat my Constitution for breakfast and tell me I can't have a gun because I might f-----' use it."

We are not in Bobbie Ann Mason country.

"Liberals hate working-class white men, especially those who don't do dishes and who whistle at women," wrote Chute in an essay censored by the *Nation* in the wake of the Littleton shooting. (Never mind that the dynamite duo were spoiled suburban brats.) Carolyn Chute loves working-class men, and she believes this forbidden love is one reason the worms of the critical world have turned on her. Feminist reviewers "don't like bedroom scenes when women are having a nice time. They want them to be beaten in the head, then finally escape at the end from brutal guys. [Robert's] not brutal, he's just . . . a guy. He's sweet."

Outlets that routinely praise novels featuring every sort of depravity, from mutilation to a fling with a barnyard cutie, have taken after *Snow Man*, whose adultery scenes might aggravate the Legion of Decency but hardly qualify as "pornographic," as *Publishers Weekly* had it. (*PW* also found the book "alarming in tone.")

My theory of why reviewers hate *Snow Man* is this: In Chute's previous novels, her Beans and LeTourneaus kept to their own trailers, their own hamlets. In *Snow Man*, one of Chute's hairy Maine men has escaped—and he's in *their* neighborhood, waving a gun, messing with *their* women. Call the police!

Snow Man is filled with angrily sardonic observations on the chasm that separates corporate women from their working-class sisters. When Robert rues that his wife, Cindy, had to get a job to pay his mother's nursing home bills—the Drummonds "couldn't take care of her anymore. Too busy chasin' the dollar"—the senator's wife replies, "Well, that's wonderful. . . . A woman needs a career as much as a man does."

Robert explains that, as a housewife, Cindy had been a canner and gardener and knitter and photographer and baker and blueberry picker; as a career gal, she was a slatherer of ketchup on strangers' Quarter Pounders at McDonald's. Excellent discipline for a budding cog in the global economy, but the senator's wife, not being a conservative journalist, gets the point.

Chute has worked for even lower wages than a McDonald's hand—she was a charwoman and potato-picker before *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*—but it is the grey flannel blouse jobs that she most despises. The "establishment feminists," she tells me, "think we should all be head of a corporation or Ann Richards—the killingest governor—that's where women belong. *Nobody belongs there*!"

Chute signaled a turn toward the political when she dedicated her third novel, *Merry Men* (1994), not only to farmers ("America's last vestiges of freedom") but also, less conventionally, to "all those millions who were born to be farmers, as they have been for thousands of years, but because of modern 'education,' Big Business, and Mechanization they cannot be and will never know their true gift but are instead herded into welfare lines, prisons, or the slavery of Big Business."

This is the plight of her people, and it has driven her to a rural radicalism that is as American as Shays' Rebellion. "Is it really virtuous to lie down in peace when your people are being assaulted, heart, body, and soul?" asks the senator's comprehending wife in *Snow Man*.

I ask Carolyn if assassination is justifiable at this stage of the American descent. "It's not nice," she replies. "Oppression is not nice. Revolution is not nice. But revolution is a reflex to oppression. It's natural. If somebody doesn't like assassination and revolution, they should speak to God and Mother Nature." And Mother Nature, Chute adds, "ain't no sweet mincing little beauty queen."

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And yet, in the end, she writes of Love, of the would-be murderer whose hand is stilled by "that suffusion of empathy which some call God, some call weakness." She closes *Snow Man* with Geronimo's chilling plaint: "I think I am a good man, but . . . all over the world they say I am a bad man."

"That applied not only to Robert but also to the senators," she explains. "Many of us think of them as bad people. They're not—the system makes monsters out of people."

Her revolutionary model is the Zapatistas of Chiapas, Mexico, but Chute need not look far for an expression of dirt-road patriotic resistance that is every bit as authentic, if not more so: for she is the cofounder and indefatigable secretary of the 2nd Maine Militia (450 members) and a stalwart of the smaller localized Border Mountain Militia.

If a rat deserts a sinking ship, what do we call those brave souls who climb aboard and start bailing? Carolyn started the 2nd Maine after the Oklahoma City bombing, when "it started to look bad for militias. I wanted to give them a good name. I thought this was really cool, there was a lot of potential, and I wanna make sure this doesn't die. Don't hide: They're all shy, these were the people who sat in the corner in school. Get out and be proud, fly your flag."

So Carolyn and an activist from the leftist Labor Party organized the 2nd Maine Militia. Their early meetings were a true rainbow coalition. There were "guys in camo, hippies, bikers, old ladies, Republicans, Democrats, Greens, Marxists, Libertarians, John Birchers: It was so cute!" says Carolyn with delight.

What do they have in common? "They're all trying to make sense of this. You talk to them, and they all sound sort of similar: The only thing that seems different is the information they're getting." Much of that information now comes from Carolyn, who as secretary fills the mailboxes of her comrades with articles from the *Nation*, *Shooting Times*, and other publications ranging from mainstream to the sort of *samizdat* that would hurl J. Edgar Reno into a tizzy.

Among the 2nd Maine's first projects was a raid on the Maine statehouse. One hundred and fifty militia men and women converged in Augusta. "We're screaming 'We the People! We the People!'" recalls Carolyn. "It was so cool."

Alas, a few Earth First! monkeywrenchers showed up and taped a sign reading "Augusta: Capital of Corporate Terrorism" over the portrait of former Governor and Union Army hero Joshua Chamberlain, thus scotching any chance of being idealized in a Ken Burns documentary.

The 2nd Maine got a bit too big for Carolyn's taste: "My idea was have it be tribal: Different people start their own militias all over the place and then we get together to do a big thing. Like in the Revolutionary War. People can develop their own style, their own neighborhood. People don't want large organizations—they won't go, especially the country people don't wanna sit under fluorescent lights and eat healthy snacks and raise money for petition drives."

Even in militias, she found, the articulate—"the professional class—would dominate. The conservative [which she uses as a synonym for working-class] guys want to come and shoot their guns and while they shoot they talk. They stop, they talk, they shoot: They're doing something. If they get a moment where they don't want to talk they shoot. It's not like they're sitting there staring at each other waiting to have this . . . *thing*."

The 2nd Maine and Border Mountain militias are nothing like the yokelish death squads that haunt the condominium dreams of Morris Dees and Hollywood scenarists. Michael Chute calls the Border Mountain "the militia of love." It marries the rural gun and shooting culture with the best of the do-your-own-thing hippie ethos. It proclaims itself "no-wing," for as Carolyn writes, "It is my deepest wish that the left, right, and all in between stop pointing horizontally when they say 'enemy' but look up at that faceless elite."

No-wing militias "are not right-wing and we are not Socialists . . . [W]e do not want Centralized Power of any kind. We do not want a GIANT THING that industrializes people or treats them as a mass. We like having a BIG Constitution. But more local economies, regional, flexible, human."

The Chutes are not theocrats or racial separatists; Michael and Carolyn are organizing a multi-militia gathering in Maine next summer to protest the drug war, no-knock searches, and the "undeclared martial law being practiced on our urban brothers and sisters." She dreams of a coalition between rural whites and urban blacks: After all, the drug war has filled the prisons with the latter, and the coming gun-control war will introduce farm boys to this emerging growth industry.

> "We don't see how dangerous the loss of small town life is," Chute insists.

"The government is going to try to take away our guns," she predicts, and "All of us naughty INDEPENDENT Yankees will thumb our noses at this. So now we'll be prime prison material . . . I personally promise that if someone comes to bother me about my guns, I SHALL bite 'em in the ankle and rip off at least one ear and curse their tribe for twenty and one centuries."

Gun control hits all her buttons; it opens the Chute, you might say (if only her name were not pronounced "Choot"), as placeless yuppies and the regime they serve seek to strip rural people of a traditional American right. Michael and Carolyn have lived with guns all their lives: She remembers, "My sixth-grade teacher used to let the kids bring their hunting rifles to school and lean them against the wall. My husband bought a really good shotgun from a kid in the hall at Sacopee Valley High. I used to carry a huge hunting knife and unopened pack of cigarettes in my pocketbook. I never intended to use either one, but I'm the kind of gal who if you tell me I shouldn't do a thing, I shall do it (unless it is a cruel thing). If I were a young kid in high school today, I would have an unsmoked joint and a gun in my purse, because you tell me I can't. I would be searched, then handed over to the police."

It is among Carolyn's greatest insights that the conflict between "the professional people" and the natives in Maine mirrors that between indigenous people and rich outsiders elsewhere in the world. The rootless espresso-addled consumers masquerading as the left in America get misty-eyed over foreign peasants fighting the big landowners and multinationals, but they hate and fear the American working class and peasantry, especially when Jethro has a gun. Part of this owes to the upper-middle-class upbringing of the Java Lefty: Everything he knows about life in the wilds outside Scarsdale he learned on TV; viz., that people who never went to college are ponytailed wife-beaters who lynch uppity blacks. The old missionary impulse is also at work: Rigoberta Menchu is so much more tinglingly exotic than Robert Drummond.

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To the mobile professional, the gun has become the symbol of the immobile redneck. It must be confiscated; he must be emasculated. "Yuppies moving into our town post their land, holler for more police and want everyone to mow their grass and spruce up to their tastes and you guessed it . . . no more gunfire," writes Carolyn.

Her novels are about tribal loyalties; Chute is an encomiast of village life. Her politics, and those of her militias, are largely an outgrowth of this faith.

"We don't see how dangerous the loss of small town life is," Chute insists: "small biz, interdependence, the front porch, aunts and uncles who live next door, Grammies who live next door. We call these losses progress, or just a little trade-off for 'success.' NOBODY IS HOME! NOBODY IS EVEN IN TOWN!"

Yet "[i]n our blood and bones we remember real mothers, real fathers, real aunts and unks. We remember protection. Security. We remember being stroked, fondled, cherished, being the future of our tribes. We remember (more recently) friendly cops. Some of us remember before TV when the living room chairs faced each other. Further back, we remember the front porch. We remember when singing and stories were free. . . . And yuh, those songs and stories were about us and our families, our personal histories, in which our parents and unks and aunts were featured in heroic ways."

Our job, she writes, is to recreate "a country made of thousands of small healthy & various communities + tribes." This will not be done at the point of a gun. "We do not plan to shoot ANYBODY," she scrawls in a militia recruiting poster. "We want everyone safe and happy. *Everyone*. Our guns are not for starting trouble. We only protect. We are not an Imperialist army. That is what the USA government military is for."

Her militias do not propose to dismantle corporate privilege through Naderite regulation; rather, they demand, in best Jefferson-Jackson fashion, the revocation of corporate charters and a law that "no one person or corporation can own more than one newspaper or magazine." This may run afoul of the First Amendment, though change that to "TV or radio station" and now we're talking. But still, given that it is the bottom of the ninth and the home team is trailing by several dozen runs—maybe the game was over 50 years ago, but there are some things we are better off not knowing—desperate times call forth radical solutions. As these Loco Foco measures would effectively dismantle Microsoft, Disney, the *New York Times*, and Gannett, they will become "issues" when Peter Jennings anchors the coverage of the death of a 69-year-old diabetic janitor who loved his family but never dated Darryl Hannah.

Lucine Kauffman

Carolyn and Michael Chute on the porch of their Maine home.

At the end of *Merry Men*, Chute introduces a lady preacher, a Casy for the laid-off millworkers of Southern Maine, who gives a succinct formulation of the Chute program:

> Our only hope . . . is interdependence. We need to start saying "no" to jobs with big business and their products . . . whenever there's a choice. We need to rely on each other. We need to support each other . . . whatever's left of your small businesses and farms, your tradesmen. To hell with buying American. Buy or trade with your *neighbor*! Buy from that *face* not the brand name! Do this whenever there's a choice, even when it costs a little more. What price can we put on our freedom?
>
> . . . For thousands of years we grew our own food. In two or three generations those skills have been stripped from us. Schooling has done this. And we condoned it . . . this reverence for the white shirt, the desk, the clean hands, the books, the computers, the bucks, the conveniences, the "good job" somewhere else! How many survival skills do your children have? How many kids today can provide for themselves food, tools, clothing, warmth . . . Please, please, please, in the *name of God*, pass along any skills you have . . . any of the old skills . . . *teach* . . . your sons and daughters . . . whisper your secrets to your neighbor's child!

The teaching will not be done in the schools, according to Carolyn, for the purpose of education is the creation of the Professional. When, in *Snow Man*, the senator's wife asserts that "education" is the key to solving every problem under the sun, Robert retorts, "don't gimme that s - - - about education fixin' this. We don't wanna be yuppies. We can't *stand* the sight of yuppies. The only education we want is to find out what the hell's really goin' on."

Robert's son "has a computer that the school pestered the parents to get. Some deal with a big company through the school. Since the computer arrived, Josh never does anything with Robert, never even looks at his father, because his face is always stuck to his computer."

Carolyn believes the school is the enemy of the family. It is cold and vast. "Look at a small town," she says. "How cozy people are. We look after each other—even those we don't like. 'He's one of ours.' New York City is big and impersonal—why would we take a school and turn it into New York City and think that's an improvement?"

Michael adds, "They don't teach faah-min." (Pardon this lone lapse into dialectal transcription—the Chutes' accents are so natural, so unaffected, so unlike the popsicle-stick-on-tongue "aaaah" of the cartoon New Englander.) "How to live off the land—they don't teach those skills. They look down on faah-min."

"If you can get people skill-less, they have to work in your mill," says Carolyn, who fingers the industrial revolution as the culprit. "Spend the whole day in school with a pen and paper whether you can do that kind of thing or not. We have all these

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people who can't do anything who would have been farmers. They'd be surviving. They can't anymore: They're living in slums, in trailer parks.

"*They* send a yellow bus to our doors and we gladly shove our children aboard. For many years, day in and day out, the Great Society whispers into each sweet perfect little childly ear . . . The Great Society begins at five years old. And notice how schools in no way resemble home. There are no grammies or dads, babies or dogs hanging around to lend or need a hand."

Her sympathies are with the quiet boy in the back of the room, the mousy girl who gets straight C's. Her imagination is rural, which is to say she understands how *right* it is for farmboys to trade shotguns in the halls, or girls to skip class to catch polliwogs. "Schools are treacherous places to us old Yankees," she says.

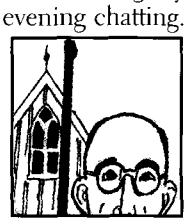
Her solution? "We need to blow up the schools and throw all the TV's into Boston Harbor. We do not want anybody in the schools when we blow them up. In fact, it would be rather nice if 80 percent of the population supported the effort. A great circle of people all holding hands will surround each brick fluorescent-lit school building. Songs of liberty will be sung. Flags will be waved. A cute 99-year-old retired schoolteacher will toss the first stick of dynamite."

That is classic Chute: insurrection with a heart, revolution with wit. The militia of love.

Carolyn understands that her bridge to the land of well-fed sheep, of the *New Yorker* and the grant pasture, is forever burned. A decade ago, she was hailed as one of the freshest voices in American fiction. *The Beans of Egypt, Maine* sold 350,000 copies. Today, she imagines an interviewer asking, "Are you going to give up writing if no one buys your books anymore?" To which she replies, "I will slowly starve and I will get very thin and weak and the power company will shut off my lights and I'll get weaker and weaker and weaker and die with a pencil in my hand in the dark. Unless I go to jail for having unregistered guns. There they will feed me and provide lights. But no pencil."

She is "feather-dusting" her next novel, the militia epic *The School on Heart's Content Road*. This sounds like her big novel, her *Grapes of Wrath*, but is a blackout ever lifted? "Once you're gone, you can't come back," as a ragged fellow sang, though if Carolyn were willing to rat on her friends and write books justifying her perfidy she might eventually win the Elia Kazan Prize at the National Book Awards. But old Yankees do not squeal.

I ask her if she expects to die a martyr's death. After all, in her first novel, Beal Bean is killed by police as he sprays gunfire into the windows of the new house yuppies are building across the way; in her latest, Robert Drummond . . . well, let's just say *Snow Man 2* is improbable. But a militia of love is no place for vainglorious fools who daydream of going out in a hail of bullets. She is, in the end, domestic, in the best sense: "I don't wanna die in an old folks' home. This is the death we always picture: the ideal death. We're sitting here some evening, by candlelight, Michael and I, enjoying a nice evening chatting. The dogs are sitting in their chairs, and a meteor the same size as the house lands on the house, squashes it, and that way they can't ever find out what a dirty housekeeper I am."



To which Michael softly adds, "We look for that meteor every night."

The Defense

by Richard Moore

"Poor boy," she laughed, "you're mad!"
I'd only glimpsed what shined
through endless folds of sanity,
a glance she had
before her mind
got there with yards of drapery.

The moon hung wrapped in cloud
over our heads that night.
It seemed to say, "Hidden, I die."
The very shroud,
pregnant with light,
glowed, filled the whole luminous sky.

But mist-thick thoughts could mock.
Whom did they make their minion—
who there under their drab regime
of stock phrase, stock
fear, stock opinion,
dictating what she dared to dream?

Ah, maybe it's the air
here: dry, cold. One needs crust
to keep a tender life unborn
as seeds have layer
on layer of husk
and toss in the wind, are not torn.

Yes, it was madness. I,
moonstruck, loose in the night—
I only wished pain, labor, birth,
wished her to lie,
like the moon white,
naked on black and fertile earth.

1950-1993

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"All the News Unfit to Print"

Signs of the Times

Vol. 1 No. 11 November 1999

What was the most important story unfit to print in 1998? No, it wasn't Kosovo: *Chronicles* may have been among the first to expose the Clinton administration's many lies, crimes, and misdemeanors in the Balkans, but that particular cat is now out of the bag.

There is a story still largely unknown, however, and so big that its non-reporting in the "mainstream" media can only be explained by a deliberate decision at the top levels of editorial control.

Ever heard of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI)? If and when applied, it will set in place a comprehensive global system of protections for Wall Street investors and deliver the final *coup de grace* to national sovereignty by giving corporations rights nearly equal to those of nations. Far more radical than NAFTA, MAI will force countries to relax or nullify human, environmental, and labor protection in order to qualify for investment and trade. Most forms of food subsidies, restrictions on land speculation, and health and environmental standards will be deemed "illegal," as will local control of forests, bans on toxic dumping and the use of pesticides, clean air standards, and limits on mineral, gas, and oil extraction.

MAI was hatched in secret negotiations that began in 1995 among the United States and 28 other countries. Many people are aware of this story only because Project Censored, a 22-year-old effort by a team of scholars and researchers at Sonoma State University in California. Each year, Project Censored reviews nominations for the most important suppressed news stories in the United States. A review of the top 25 censored stories of last year is contained in a book (*Censored 1999: The News That Didn't Make the News* by Peter Phillips), which proves that "freedom of the press" is something very different from free distribution of the news.

An attempt to locate "mainstream" coverage of the story yielded but one item in the *Arizona Republic* (June 9), which described the MAI as

> the constitution for a new global economy . . . written in secret by anonymous trade bureaucrats under heavy influence of big business. The agreement would go beyond NAFTA and GATT by allowing corporations "to sue any level of government—state, municipal or federal—for what they perceive as losses based on legislative actions, strikes or boycotts."

Peter Phillips, director of the program at Sonoma State, says that what most people read, see, and hear is controlled by an increasingly smaller number of corporate board rooms. Not surprisingly, his team named the war in the Balkans as one of the most suppressed stories. "Western editors seemed to prefer to keep the story simple: one villain and as much blood as possible," Phillips observes.

Warnings about American global actions and designs—economic, political, and cultural—have been heard in Europe for some time, but since the Kosovo intervention, they are increasingly found in the establishment media. In a BBC Radio 4 documentary ("The Long Arm of Uncle Sam," August 2), Serge Halimi, editor of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, opined that "globalization" in fact means Americanization:

> For many American political leaders, but also journalists, the American model shouldn't be questioned, shouldn't be challenged. And if it were questioned or challenged, compliance would be enforced, not only by the power of arms if necessary but also more subtly . . . : the work of economic institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD and political institutions such as the United Nations which only seem to exist when it's docile to American wishes.

This resentment of America is not confined to Europe, and not only to American economic imperialism, according to Michael Elliott—formerly with the *Economist*—who said on the BBC program that "the extent to which non-Americans dislike the imperialistic aspects of American power and globalisation is a true mystery to most Americans":

> It is an article of faith among Americans that their country is different . . . because it is benign, because it has no imperial mission, no sense of conquering other countries or other cultures. . . . I did a round-the-world trip immediately after the Chinese embassy was bombed in Belgrade during the Kosovo war. Everywhere one went, but of course particularly in China, there was this deep, deep, deep resentment at the—not the irrationality of the American power but the carelessness of American power. I was reminded of that marvelous passage in Scott Fitzgerald's novel, *Tender Is the Night*, when he describes the principal protagonists, a couple called the Divers, who were careless with people. They dropped things, they dropped people, they dropped incidents in such a way that other people were hurt, without them really being conscious of it. And that to me is how the United States is seen, and possibly even behaves outside the US today.

When France's Prime Minister Lionel Jospin proclaimed "yes to the market economy, no to the market society," he implied that in a financial world run by Wall Street, a star-spangled globalization will make the Old Continent less civilized, less itself. But one-world ideology demands not only a "global economy"—a universal system of *laissez-faire* to be ushered in by MAI—but also a global criminal justice system. The Clinton administration has

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been making progress on that front, too.

The preparatory commission for the establishment of the International Criminal Court has been busy at work this past summer at the United Nations. According to an Associated Press report (August 14), the United States is not opposed to the idea in principle. America's ambassador for war crimes issues, David Scheffer, "is trying to find a legal solution that will enable Washington to sign the treaty" by making American citizens and military personnel immune to "politically motivated prosecutions." In her internet column (*www.originalsources.com*, August 17), Mary Mostert explained the meaning of this proviso:

> The unspoken concern here is that the International Criminal Court, which is designed to do on a international basis what the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has been doing–targeting military and elected Yugoslav leaders for war crimes–could end up indicting and trying Bill Clinton. Moves to indict him, Madeleine Albright and Tony Blair for their bombing of Yugoslavia and for allowing the KLA to implement its long held desire to seize control of Kosovo and evict or kill all non-Albanians, are gathering steam.

This was confirmed in a Reuters report (August 15) in which U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee spokesperson Marc Thiessen warned that the Clinton administration wants to exempt from investigation or prosecution by the ICC any personnel involved in official military actions:

> The United States wants "a clear recognition that states sometimes engage in very legitimate uses of military force to advance international peace and security," he explained. Thiessen called for "100% certitude that this court is not going to be turned into a vehicle for political attacks against the United States, [or] politicized prosecutions of American soldiers and officials." Thiessen said that without the exception, the United States will be pushed "into a policy of isolation, against its will." Without such protection for U.S. troops, the United States would not risk humanitarian intervention in places where it has no vital national security interests, he said.

Thiessen admitted that carving out protection for the United States—but not for people the United States accuses of war crimes (like Slobodan Milosevic)—is going to be difficult. "I, quite frankly, don't know how they are going to thread the needle," he said.

The prospect of the United States being "pushed" into a policy of isolation and giving up its addiction to "humanitarian intervention" is pleasing—so much so that one can only hope the needle doesn't get threaded after all. As Mary Mostert aptly concludes:

> what seems to be happening is that Clinton's and Madeleine Albright's arrogance in assuming that, as leaders of the World's only Super Power, they were untouchable and that they could break any International Law they wanted to break with impunity may not be entirely accurate. Clinton's fear of indictment may help the conservatives who fear the unbridled and unchecked nature of the proposed ICC. Indictments make strange bedfellows.

A further illustration of the administration's moral duplicity can be found in the *Guardian*, and it concerns Al Gore's role in preventing low-cost AIDS medication from reaching needy patients in the Third World (August 11). According to the British paper,

> Al Gore's presidential bandwagon has fallen into a sudden and unexpected mire . . . Gore stands accused of conspiring to help his supporters in the rich and powerful American pharmaceutical companies at the expense of the lives of Aids sufferers. The issue is the price of a medicine–against the price of a human life.

This most touchy-feely of presidential hopefuls seems unconcerned that, without these drugs, tens of millions of people in the developing world will die in the next few years. The drugs are very expensive, beyond the means of most people in Africa and Asia. Gore has repeatedly defended the U.S. pharmaceutical firms' claim that their price reflects the enormous sums of money that they invested in research and development. But, according to the *Guardian*, this is disingenuous since many key AIDS drugs, such as Ritonavir and ddI, were developed with government money. And yet the American pharmaceutical industry, backed by Gore, is attempting to stop countries such as South Africa and Thailand from developing their own versions of AIDS drugs at a fraction of the usual price.

> Thailand has produced good-quality versions of vital drugs, which have forced multinational companies to drop their prices locally. Pfizer used to charge $14 for a daily dose of fluconazole . . . Last year, three local companies began making it and the price dropped to just over $1. Likewise the monthly cost of the Aids drug zidovudine has been forced down, from a prohibitive $324 in 1992 to $87.

The U.S. government has borne down on Thailand with all its superior economic might and threats of trade sanctions, finally forcing the Thais to curtail licensing of drug patents to local companies. South Africa has been in dispute with the United States over AIDS drugs for years, with Al Gore leading the negotiations, and Pretoria has been threatened with sanctions if it does not relent. According to the *Guardian*, the outcome would have been the same regardless of which party controls the White House: "It is his bandwagon that has got mired, but it could have been anybody's. The drugs industry is lavish in its support of both the Democratic and Republican parties."

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The Force of Capitalism

by David Gordon

"Trade is a social act."

—John Stuart Mill

False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism
by John Gray
New York: The New Press;
262 pp., $25.00

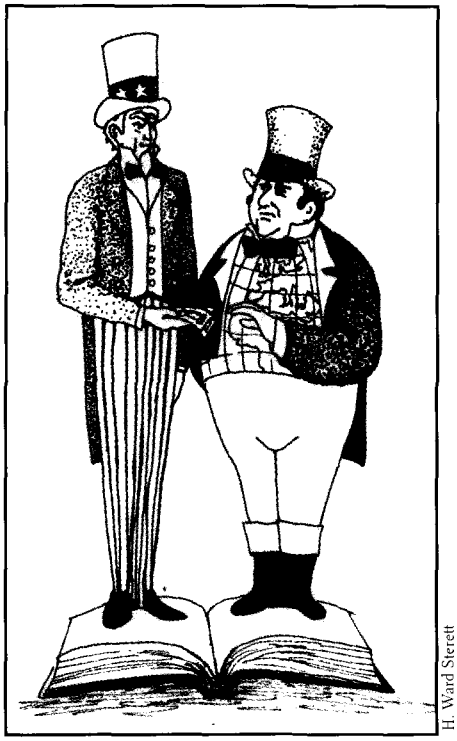
Turbo-Capitalism: Winners and Losers in the Global Economy
by Edward Luttwak
New York: HarperCollins;
290 pp., $26.00

◆

If only all of John Gray's *False Dawn* were as good as the first two pages of Chapter 6! In them, our author succinctly and accurately diagnoses why communism in Soviet Russia failed.

"Between 1918 and 1921," Mr. Gray writes,

> the Bolsheviks attempted to transform Russia into a communist economy. The War Communism which the Bolsheviks tried to impose on Russia during those years embodied an authentic Marxian vision. It aimed to abolish capitalism, in which private property, market exchange, and the institution of money are central, and construct an economy that was collectively owned and rationally planned.



H. Ward Sterett

The attempt, of course, failed disastrously, and even the compromise with the market forced on Lenin, Stalin, and their eminently forgettable successors led only to a delay in communism's inevitable collapse.

What lesson should be drawn from communism's failure? One might think the answer obvious. Should we not throw in our lot with the free market, demonstrably superior to its socialist rival? Such seems the verdict of common sense, but it is altogether too simple for the Professor of European Thought at the London School of Economics.

We should not conclude that capitalism works and socialism fails, says Mr. Gray. Quite to the contrary, we should view both systems as expression of a common "Enlightenment project." According to the capitalist variant of this nefarious project, only one set of institutions, that mandated by classical liberalism, has any legitimacy. Away with all local customs and traditions! The market must reign over all. In the paeans to freedom of Herbert Spencer and Friedrich Hayek, John Gray believes, lie the seeds of totalitarian control.

How can Mr. Gray say that free institutions engender tyranny? Quite easily, he responds. Classical liberals destroy all competing ways of life. You must be a capitalist—or, more likely, a proletarian—whether you want to or not.

The argument proceeds largely by verbal trickery. A free market does not force anyone to seek money avidly, to abandon local customs, to work for a manufacturer, or any of the other dire outcomes the author laments. Rather, it is a framework in which people may voluntarily engage in any transactions that they think will be to their benefit, so long as these do not violate the rights of others. If, like Mr. Gray, you dislike or distrust multinational corporations, nothing compels you to deal with them. He is totally wrong, then, when he claims: "A global free market presupposes that economic modernization means the same thing everywhere. It interprets the globalization of the economy—the spread of industrial production and interconnected market economies throughout the world—as the inexorable advance of a singular type of western capitalism—the American free

David Gordon is the editor of the Mises Review *and of the recent volume,* Secession, State, and Liberty *(Transaction Books).*

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market."

The "force" exerted by capitalism is of a rather peculiar sort: It leaves people free to depart from the arrangements that Mr. Gray prefers them to have. They would not enter the global market unless they wish to do so. This, for him, constitutes the spread of compulsory Enlightenment rationality. Mr. Gray would have done well to study economic theory more, if need be by reducing his perusal of Heideggerian banalities. He crucially misunderstands a central theorem of economics, Ricardo's law of comparative costs.

As suggested already, a basic argument for the free market is that it provides a framework for mutually beneficial trades. Ricardo showed that space for such trades exists even if one party to the exchange is in all respects more efficient than his trading partner. A surgeon who is better at taking the temperatures of his patients than his nurse may find it more to his advantage to concentrate on his operations, leaving the less skilled task in the inferior hands of his aide. This phenomenon extends the benefit of mutual gains from trade to those absolutely less fit and thus should be welcomed by all friends of the less fortunate.

And so it was by free-market economists such as Ludwig von Mises. He termed Ricardo's principle the "law of association" to emphasize its importance as a rule promoting general welfare. Mr. Gray misses the nature of this principle entirely. Far from being the key to social cooperation, it is in his view something that holds good only under very restricted conditions.

He contributes the following incredible paragraph:

> In the classical theory free trade capital is immobile. Ricardo's doctrine of comparative advantage . . . says that when comparatively inefficient enterprises or industries shrink in any country, others will grow, absorbing the capital and labour released from the declining activities. Within each trading country capital will move to those economic activities in which it is most productive. Ricardian comparative advantage applies *internally* in trading nations, not externally between them. . . . Ricardo understood that this could be true only so long as capital is not to any significant extent internationally mobile.

No, no, Mr. Gray! The whole point of Ricardo's theorem is that both parties in a trade—both countries, in international trade—benefit if each concentrates on the product it can make better, when compared with the other trader. Gray has things the wrong way round: what counts is not "most productive" activities considered just internally.

Mr. Gray's error leads him to the risible assertion that if capital is mobile, then the "effect . . . is to nullify the Ricardian doctrine of comparative advantage." Again, the reality is just the reverse. Both in trade with immobile capital and in international capital movements, the mutual advantage of all parties to an exchange is the *fons et origo* of economic activity. If all parties did not expect to benefit, no trade would take place.

If our author has misunderstood Ricardo, he has at least not done it in so egregious a way as in his earlier study, *Liberalism*, where he located Ricardo within the Scottish Enlightenment. But I should not be too kind to Mr. Gray, who commits equally awful lapses in *False Dawn*. We learn, e.g., that Russia "abolished serfdom in 1861, a year before slavery was abolished in the United States by Abraham Lincoln." I hope it is not considered an exercise of sterile pedantry to point out that the Emancipation Proclamation did not abolish slavery; in any case, Mr. Gray has got the year wrong.

Regardless of the author's mistakes, though, does he not have a case that I have so far underestimated? I have argued, in a naively rosy fashion, that since trade under capitalism is voluntary, all parties to an exchange are, by their own expectations, better off. But what about third parties not directly involved in an exchange? If my small bookstore cannot compete with a local branch of Barnes and Noble, surely I will not think my situation improved as I tearfully board my windows.

If, in fact, free market capitalism led to massive and permanent dislocations, no doubt a strong indictment could be brought against it, but no such case is raised here. Instead, Mr. Gray simply points to high unemployment rates in various European countries. True enough, the rates are lower in the United States, but this fact ought not to induce in us a false complacency: "Lastly, all estimates of America's employment record must take into account America's incarceration rates—over a million people who would be seeking work if American penal policies resembled those of any other western country are behind bars in the U.S."

Once more, Mr. Gray appears ignorant of economic theory. If workers cannot find jobs, why will they not bid down wage rates until it becomes profitable to employ them? If laws and union regulations prevent them from doing so, why blame the free market? Mr. Gray's example of the prison population rests for its force on the assumption that only a fixed number of jobs exists. If so, then those in prison would, if free, compete with those already employed for a limited number of jobs. But why assume this? Why not assume that a greater labor supply would find new jobs not now occupied?

RECEIVED WISDOM

Krisis no. 22 (March 1999); edited by Alain de Benoist and Jean Laloux; 130 F or 20 euros.

"*Fédéralisme?*" is the title of this special number of *Krisis*, which begins with an essay by M. de Benoist on the German Calvinist Althusius, who worked out perhaps the only systematic theory for a federal system. Benoist contrasts the Althusian principle of subsidiarity with Bodin's concept of unitary sovereignty: "It is the eternal debate between the nation-state and imperial Europe, Jacobin nationalism and decentralized federalism, between republicans and democrats."

The issue also includes articles by Paul Piccone and Robert D'Amico, Jean Baechler, and Thomas Fleming, as well as conversations with European federalists, including Jean-Louis Clergerie, who holds the Jean Monnet professorship at Limoges. Prof. Clergerie tries to rescue federalism from decentralization, a notion he finds alien to French institutions. Tocqueville understood the principle, however, as well as anyone, and so in their hearts did the Catholic peasants of the Vendée uprising during the French Revolution and the aristocrats who mounted the Fronde rebellion against centralized authority. The greatest French governor of Canada, the Comte de Frontenac, was a Frondeur in his youth, and he tried to establish a free parliament in Quebec until Louis XIV's ministers undermined his efforts.

The wisdom of Frontenac might have saved Louis' dynasty from extinction and France from a great many problems. Even Jean Marie Le Pen, often regarded as a national socialist, seems to know that the strength of France lies in her regional cultures. The federal principle is a human principle, as M. de Benoist realizes, and those who flout it suffer the consequences.

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I have not shown that the more optimistic assumption should be adopted, nor have I responded to Keynesian claims that, in some circumstances, bidding down wage rates will not relieve unemployment. But the merits of the capitalist case are not here the primary point. Rather, my contention is a more limited one. The issue between the free market and its foes involves economic theory: It will not do simply to point to various statistics, as Mr. Gray has done. These must be subsumed within some relevant theory, and this Mr. Gray has *not* done. When one contemplates what he has made of Ricardo, perhaps it is just as well.

Mr. Luttwak has a much firmer grasp of economics than the Professor of European Thought. Readers in search of a good, brief account of Ricardo's law can hardly do better than to consult *Turbo-Capitalism*:

> Import barriers artificially preclude efficiency gains identical to those achieved by better technology, better organization or any other source of domestic productivity. That goods or services originate from a point on the surface of the planet that happens to be classified as foreign at a given time . . . is an entirely meaningless attribute in purely economic terms.

Luttwak, accordingly, advocates market capitalism, but not for everyone. If a country labors under inefficient restrictions, then by all means let the market operate. "In poor countries, given favorable circumstances including foreign investment, free trade can drastically alter the total economy, lifting much of the population to a much higher level of income." No doubt the market dislocates people used to a certain way of life, who now find they must suddenly adjust to changed conditions. Given their low level of wealth, the difficulties are worth it, he says. But Luttwak refuses to join forces with Mises and Hayek. Though capitalism benefits the less well-off nations, this is not, for him, the full story.

In more prosperous nations, such as the United States and the countries of Western Europe, economic dislocations caused by the market may be socially too much to bear. What of those thrown out of work by foreign competition? Are their losses canceled by the slight gains in consumer welfare that come to those who already have a high standard of living?

Free-market capitalism, Luttwak argues, is good, but directed capitalism, as it has existed in the United States and Europe in the decades since World War II, is even better. A wise government can cushion the shocks of an unfettered market, and governmentally planned research and development can achieve wonders beyond the scope of the market. Mr. Luttwak knows full well the main objection to his proposals:

> The case against industrial policy can be summarized in one word: bureaucracy. More specifically . . . [the] unitary decisions [of efficient bureaucrats] will lack the blind wisdom contained in the sum total of competing firms and entrepreneurs. And, of course, efficiency and honesty, let alone wisdom, cannot be taken for granted.

Nevertheless, he will not abandon his case. Does not the success of Japan's industrial policy show what an efficient bureaucracy can achieve? Unfortunately, Luttwak does not fit his observations within a theory but relies instead on anecdote and authority. (For the Japanese case, he appeals to Chalmers Johnson.) But facts do not interpret themselves, and, absent a theory of how his directed capitalism works, *Turbo-Capitalism* is ultimately no more of an effective challenge to the free market than John Gray's *False Dawn*.

c

Lilies for Lot's Wife

by Charles Edward Eaton

The man was steeped among yellow lilies.
Stay long enough and he would turn to stone,
Lily-colored with perhaps yellow spit
Dribbling from his hard mouth as if he meant
To chew up the world before it got to him.
But an icon of his own indolence
Holds all the silt of sun and savagery.
He who would have been tapped of yellow wine
For filling the cups of friends and lovers—
This is a jaundiced spot that all have known,
That full, fulsome figure in the garden,
Handsome in a way but still a hostage
To the gross instructions from the flowers—
Worst of all, you cannot blame them either:
Yesterday, the roses, their man of quartz
Pinked up with a passion to drip rose wine.
If you cannot pour, pretend to pollinate,
Long for friends to brush against you,
Hide in the groin a bag of yellow seed,
Remembering yesterday's pink potpourri
Held shriveled in a jar of jaded hours—
A smile, a touch, and the stone man totters,
A push, he falls head over heels in love,
The quarry of yellow stone shoveled, spent:
You are the tumbled thing you meant to be
The yellow lilies thrashing everywhere.
Tomorrow is another colored day
At the lip of the maze of metaphors.
If you look back like Lot's wife on lilies,
Someone you know is gathering up shards—
Fragments, more fragments, for lovers and friends.

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Right Answer, Wrong Label

by Clyde Wilson

The American Counter Revolution: A Retreat From Liberty, 1783-1800
by Larry E. Tise
Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books; 634 pp., $49.95

◆

A good historian ought to make it clear where he is coming from rather than assume an impossible Olympian objectivity. Then, if he has handled his evidence honestly, he has fulfilled the demands of his craft—whether or not we agree with the interpretation he has placed upon his evidence. Ideally, interpretation should come separately from, and after, presentation of that evidence. Two historians, for instance, may agree that the New Deal was not really very radical a program. One of these may be pleased by this conclusion and the other regret it; both, however, in their honest description have done their job as historians. Their opinion *about* their finding, of course, is another question. (And as Sir Herbert Butterfield wisely warned long ago, historians' opinions can too easily become self-centered moral judgments, even preferences of taste masquerading as moral judgments.)

Larry Tise, by these criteria, is a good historian. He tells us up front (self-indulgently, alas, and at a little more length than necessary) what he is and where he is coming from: a liberal unhappy with what he considers the failed promise of the American Revolution. In the period he has under consideration, he believes that liberty (by which he means feminism and egalitarianism) was repudiated by its friends just as it was about to be realized in practice.

Tise provides us with a rich survey of evidence from America, Britain, Ireland, and France (including its colony of Santo Domingo) concerning shifts in public opinion during the French Revolution. Americans in this period, he believes, "marched from the worship of liberty to the worship of order." I would interpret what happened and why somewhat differently, but I agree that the phenomena he describes took place. And recognizing that what Tise considers a "reaction" did indeed occur among thinking Americans advances our understanding beyond the usual superficialities and is therefore welcome, despite the problem of mislabeling.

If only the author did not assume that the natural goal and *summum bonum* of history is a feminist, multicultural, egalitarian society, then he would have it right. When one believes, however, that multicultural egalitarianism is the appointed end of all human affairs, one must assume some fault, some perverse deviation to be ferreted out to explain why utopia was not realized at that time. Why *did* Americans give themselves over to evil—that is, succumb to anti-egalitarian opinions and a preference for order after the War of Independence?

This approach depends, however, on the tacit assumption that when the American revolutionaries proclaimed the cause of liberty and the rights of man, as they certainly did, they meant the same thing by them as did an end-of-the-millennium liberal, or at least a French Jacobin. The catch, of course, is that they didn't. The "reaction" of opinion and action toward order, including an insistence on patriarchy and homogeneity of citizenship, that followed the American Revolution was not a betrayal of anything—it was merely the normal and natural expression of Americans' inheritance and experience and the consolidation of their achievements. We need only reflect on what might have ensued had Americans followed the path Tise thinks they ought to have taken: an American Terror, Napoleon, or Santo Domingo? (There was a Napoleon—Alexander Hamilton—waiting in the wings. To think such horrors could not have happened belongs to the same order of thinking as to say that communism did not fail because "true communism" was never tried.)

Americans could have taken no other path than what they chose to take and still remain themselves. They were predominantly serious Christians, and liberals have never understood the problem Christians have with the French Revolution—which itself precluded Jacobinism. Their social fabric and mores were Puritan in New England, acquisitive bourgeois in the Middle States, and a volatile mixture of gentry and Border tribalism in the South. None of this lent itself to the kind of society prized by Professor Tise. Americans' conception of liberty arose from a solid legal and constitutional tradition and from real experience, not from speculation. It stipulated limited government of a kind not energized to pursue a feminist, multicultural utopia—a thing that it would never have occurred to them to pursue since the American people, unlike some Frenchmen, well understood that it had never existed in the history of the world, and never could exist. Americans, moreover, had a task before them—civilizing a continental wilderness—that only self-confident Anglo-Celtic males could have been expected to accomplish. It is ungrateful for a later generation, living at ease on their accomplishments, to find fault with them for not being as socially sensitive and noble as we supposedly are.

For Larry Tise, Thomas Jefferson is the greatest villain of all, "the most radical counter-revolutionary" of the period who provided the emotional and intellectual stimulus for reaction (that is, a preference for self-governing order over egalitarianism). Tise is accurate in this judgment: I salute him for identifying the Jefferson whom I have been celebrating in these pages and elsewhere for over 30 years, though in the end he mislabels the great man.

Edmund Burke had it right, as usual. Asked how he could defend the Americans and the Irish while being so adamantly against the French revolutionaries, he explained that there is a difference between the desire for liberty "which arises from Penury and irritation, from scorned loyalty, and rejected Allegiance" and that "which is Speculative in Origin." The latter, of course, is Jacobinism, then and now.

But take heart, Mr. Historian of the Counter-Revolution! The Jacobinism that the founders of American liberty so wisely rejected is fastened tightly enough upon us now, though its goals of course can never be achieved, only projected into some future when evil reaction will have been overcome. That, really, is a part of its charm.

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The Past as Prologue

by Jacob Neusner

A People Apart: The Jews in Europe, 1789-1939
by David Vital
Oxford: Oxford University Press; 941 pp., $45.00

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David Vital describes his work as a political history, whose subject is the exercise of legitimate violence. He recounts how the Jews of Europe addressed the political crisis that overtook them between the end of the *ancien regime* in 1789 and the collapse of their rebuilt social order in Europe in 1939: His subject is nothing less than the political evolution of the Jewish people.

Beginning with an account of Jewish politics over the long centuries of Christian rule in Europe, Vital proceeds to an analysis of "integration and fragmentation." Having demonstrated how Enlightenment thinkers in England, France, the Germanys, Poland, and Russia all defined the Jews "as an encumbrance to be dealt with," he considers early responses, fearful as well as positive, to political emancipation before turning to the formulation of "the Jewish Question"—that is to say, the re-characterization and re-demonization of the Jews. The second part of his account describes "movement" (pogroms, poverty, migration, decline, and the focus on Eastern European Jewry as "the question"), then moves on to "auto-emancipation" (the Jews' reconsideration of themselves as a political entity, foreshadowing Zionism), and, finally, to "crystallization," the crisis of the final third of the 19th century in which antisemitism emerged as a violent political movement.

Part III embraces World War I and Zionism; "Bolshevik Russia and the binding of its Jews," "the great slaughter" of the period of the Bolshevist wars; the nation-state as grindstone and ancient frictions in the new Poland; Polish equivocation and Jewish ambivalence; the crushing of the German Jews; and, lastly, "denouement," which describes Jewish political organization and the aims of Zionism, the needs of the Jews, pragmatism and honor, the final rejection, and—as epilogue—a couple of pages on the culmination of a century and a half of Jewish history, amounting to the mass murder of more than five-and-a-half million Jews.

A sad story, but also a tale that has been told many times; the challenge presented by its dramatic power and form have proved irresistible to historians over the centuries. Indeed, just as the destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. led to the formation of the Pentateuch and the authorized history from Genesis through Kings, so, quite naturally, have historians sought to identify, organize, and explain the events that led directly from 1789 to 1939. The particular perspective of Zionism, with its interest in the Jews' taking control of their own destiny and acting on their own initiative, certainly compels a hearing, since many identify the creation of the state of Israel in 1948—not the destruction of European Jewry—as the proper epilogue to the tragedy.

Given the importance and massive complexity of the subject and the obvious control exhibited by Vital over his material, I wish I could report that the book is a success and deserves a wide reading. Alas, if within this ungainly sprawl of 900 pages there is a 300-page book waiting to emerge, Oxford's editors have not helped to discover it. (The publisher's slipshod approach is elsewhere apparent: a glued, not sewn, binding for a book of nearly 1,000 pages!) To put matters bluntly: A *People Apart* is not so much a weighty work of thought as a ponderous, heavy-handed cobbling together of little narratives into a single big, tedious, only occasionally coherent story.

Part of the problem is stylistic. Vital writes verbose, endless sentences strung out in paragraphs sometimes running for a page and a half. This in addition to truckloads of infelicitous word choices, acres of prose lacking any sense of rhythm or music, to say nothing of simple mistakes in grammar missed by the copy editor. There are sentences in the book that, reread three and four times, still prove beyond comprehension. Some are simply awkward, the product of a tin ear for language, as in the following passage:

> And everything in the invertebrate and increasingly fragmented structure of Jewish society continues as before to militate against ideas, reflections, and programs being pulled together as a basis for coherent and co-ordinated action or even the very simple declarations of common purpose and intention on which the least of political acts is necessarily contingent.

What can Vital possibly mean by that sentence? Imagine reading 940 pages of such soggy, clunky prose! Readers discovering for themselves that a random sampling yields still more appalling assaults on the English language will share my curiosity: Where were Lord Bullock's and Sir William Deaken's minds when this book came their way, and how could the editors at Oxford University Press be so utterly distracted as not to have noticed that this book is only marginally intelligible?

If Vital's prose utterly lacks grace and music, his narrative is a match for it, being as ponderous, slow-witted, and heavy-handed as the language. Vital seems generally to have outlined his topics and constructed his paragraphs accordingly, resorting to transitions of a facile character for what he must have hoped would make for a sustained presentation. But history should be narrative, and, in the hands of a master, it is. Because Vital fails to compose a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end, he fails to inform readers of what they need to know when he introduces a given subject, necessary to his outline but not logically called for by the narrative strategy he has adopted. The logic of his book is not a narrative logic, and so what coherence A *People Apart* has owes nothing to the traditional historical method which insists on presenting a well-shaped story with urgency and energy. As an historian, Vital appears to be competing for a Nobel Prize in Boredom.

Still, if the book is dull, the topic is not. The real problem is its heuristic assumption: The Jews, having long constituted a nation among other nations, in the 19th century faced the problem of finding a place for themselves within other nations as the old order, which had accommodated their particular nationality on its own terms, gave way. In response to this crisis, Zionism amounted to the re-nationalization of the Jewish nation. Presented in this way, the story of the Jews in Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries becomes the story of antisemitism and the Jewish response to it. Vital hands the antisemites a victory they did not earn: the power to define what matters about the Jews and their history. But this reading, by politicizing and externalizing "the

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essential condition of the Jewish people," inevitably secularizes as well the supernatural understanding of "Israel"—meaning those who know God—by which the Jews defined the social entity they so long constituted. The framing of the issue facing the Jews, the selection and orchestration of events into an historical narrative—these beg the theological question that Vital finds himself unable to confront.

Any history should allow us to make sense of what happened next, but Vital's story of the Jews in Europe does not prepare us for what took place after 1939—which is nothing less than the rebirth not only of the state of Israel but of the Jews in Europe and of Europe's overseas diasporas—in North and Latin America, for example. And so the logic of the Zionist reading of Jewish history shatters against the fact of continuity beyond 1939—the continuity, especially, of Zionism itself.

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First Things First

by Bill Croke

Some Horses
by Thomas McGuane
Illustrations by Buckeye Blake
New York: The Lyons Press;
176 pp., $22.95

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Once, in a Paris bookstore, biographer Leon Edel heard Ernest Hemingway's take on T.E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. "Camels!" bellowed Papa. "Camels!" In his new book, Thomas McGuane has given us Horses! Horses!

There is a theory that the artist who invests too much intellectual capital in the pursuit of sport or hobbies cheapens, or stints, his art. For 30 years—in a dozen books—Thomas McGuane has been one of the West's foremost chroniclers of the sweeping change and daily vagaries of life in America's fastest-growing region. But Mr. McGuane has not published a novel since 1992 (*Nothing But Blue Skies*), occupying himself in the interim with the writing of essays on the blood sports and a subject close to his heart—horses. *Some Horses* (complete with a Cormac McCarthyesque dust jacket) is his latest effort in this vein.

The long holiday from the demands of fiction raises two questions: Has McGuane given up on the novel as his primary form of literary expression, a form with which he has previously dazzled readers (e.g., of *The Bushwhacked Piano, Ninety Two in the Shade, Keep the Change*) with his virtuosity? And has he become the sort of complacent writer who slips easily into the limbo of updated reprints (three of the nine pieces in *Some Horses* were cut from the herd of his 1982 collection of sporting pieces, *An Outside Chance*)?

Some Horses is dedicated to Buster Welch, a Texan and legendary cutting horse trainer much admired by Mr. McGuane. Mr. Welch's six-decade career as horseman and rancher is the subject of the eponymous "Buster," in which he instructs the writer in his cabalistic equine art. McGuane's regard for his mentor is such that he can write:

> . . . an unbroke horse is original unmodeled clay that can be brought to a level of great beauty or else remain in its original muddy form, dully consuming protein with the great mass of living creatures on the planet, but a cutting horse is a work of art.

The best of the three reprints, "The Life and Hard Times of Chink's Benjibaby" is a comic rumination on the life of a much admired, talented, and extremely difficult cutting horse. McGuane is fascinated by this mare's cutting skill and high-strung hijinks, which include routinely wrecking stalls and horse-trailers and causing near riots at cutting horse competitions: "The first description I ever had of Chink's Benjibaby was that she was the horse that jumped out of the El Paso Coliseum." Another reprint, "Another Horse," is at best an amusing piece about an elk season camping trip, rather than one about horses. In fact, horses play only a small part in the story, being—like tents, trails, and mountains—just part of the scenery. The essay is a vivid paean to life in the Montana Rockies, the sort of writing at which McGuane excels, yet in the overall scheme of the book it is nothing more than stylish boilerplate.

In "Roping from A to B," McGuane writes humorously about his days (20 years ago by now) as an amateur team roper on the local Montana summer rodeo circuit.

> My own mental drill is based on advice from a fine old roper: "Remember one thing when you back your horse into the box. There are nine hundred million Chinese who don't care whether you catch the steer or not."

At essay's end, the author competes in a rodeo in Gardiner, Montana, and with his partner wins the team roping event, proving that he isn't merely a writer with "Ivory Snow hands."

"Roanie" is the nickname of McGuane's own "Lucky Bottom 79," definitely a soulmate (I would guess that Mr. McGuane believes horses to have souls) to the aforementioned Chink's Benjibaby. Roanie takes a routine trip to the veterinarian, where the gelding misbehaves and is returned home like an incorrigible schoolchild with a curt, clinical note from the vet that reads: "Lucky Bottom 79's rectal temperature not taken as he continually endangered human life."

McGuane is indeed fond of the cutting horse competition circuit, as he relates in "Sugar" and—especially—"On the Road Again." In the latter story, he takes a tour with his wife, four horses, various tools and horse supplies, and some of the more necessary items for modern survival such as a microwave oven and a color TV: The "Horsabago" is a "modern farm at seventy-five miles per hour." McGuane is good at describing the dusty suburban arenas populated by diehard enthusiasts of his arcane sport. And then there are his funny insights on hauling his 38-foot rig on the L.A. freeway system: "Oncoming traffic was pouring into my flanks from either side until I was part of a southbound general river of metal, confined in four directions to the gestalt of a seventy-two-mile-an-hour traffic jam." Also, Mr. McGuane has a comic adventure, lying under the Horsabago and working to repair the RV's portable sewage system, which I'll leave to the reader's imagination. Altogether, the piece amounts to a compelling argument for staying home and avoiding the modern multi-crazy existence of life in the fast lane. The collection closes with "A Foal," a beautifully rendered vignette on the advent of "a new horse."

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Throughout these essays, Thomas McGuane's prose prances and capers like a Lippizaner stallion. His next book (*The Longest Silence*) will be a miscellany devoted to another of his passions—fishing—whose component pieces will shine, I'm sure, like freshly caught brook trout.

All well and good, but where is this accomplished sportsman-novelist's next novel?

Bill Croke writes from Cody, Wyoming.

The Seven-League Crutches

by J.O. Tate

No Other Book: Selected Essays by Randall Jarrell
Edited by Brad Leithauser
New York: HarperCollins;
376 pp., $27.50

Remembering Randall: A Memoir of Poet, Critic, and Teacher Randall Jarrell
by Mary von Schrader Jarrell
New York: HarperCollins;
171 pp., $22.00

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Sideswiped by a car, Randall Jarrell died 34 years ago at the age of 51. That he has remained a presence as a writer and even as a man is vividly testified to by these books, which bring back a lot of memories, and different kinds of memories. Randall Jarrell was a force, even a star of the literary firmament, and when his books came out they were read and they were reacted to, though not always with precision. I remember an undergraduate poet asking me, in 1964, "Have you read *The Owl* by John Crowe Ransom?" I was able to return, "Are you referring to *The Bat-Poet* by Randall Jarrell?" Since then, I believe, that once-young poet, a disciple of Yvor Winters, has been a political scientist.

Randall Jarrell's death in 1965 was a great loss, a particular and even peculiar one. Because of a mental breakdown he had suffered before the disaster, there has been a widespread conviction that actually he committed suicide. Jarrell's widow, in her memoir, has argued effectively that the circumstances show his death to have been an accident, not self-destruction. Jarrell's biographer, William H. Pritchard (*Randall Jarrell, A Literary Life* [1990]), declared that the exact nature of his death remains unknowable. However that may be, Jarrell's death entangled him forever in the context of the 60's, confessional poetry, and the unambiguous suicides of other poets, such as Sylvia Plath, John Berryman, and Ann Sexton.

But I believe that there was another problematic aspect of Jarrell's death which has not been explored, and that is the matter of its "timing" in the larger cultural context. I find it hard to believe that Jarrell could have remained his old self (not that there was only one of them), both poised and open, in the coarsening that was mega-magnified in the 60's: ranting against the Vietnamese war, Allen Ginsberg, "howling poetry," Woodstock, and all the rest of it. If we had Randall Jarrell around today at the age of 85, would he be feebly directing his walker toward a hip-hop poetry slam? I somehow doubt this.

Well, these two books remind us of what all the fuss was about. Mary Jarrell's memoir gives us an intimate portrait of the man, the poet at home, the writer, the friend. Her book is a fine example of its kind, and it will make its way onto many a shelf beside her own edition of Jarrell's *Letters* (1985) and Pritchard's biography. Through her book and others, we do have Randall Jarrell available to us today, and that is an enrichment of possibility that is both welcome and needed.

Brad Leithauser's edition of Jarrell's essays will stand as the collection for our time of Jarrell's statements on poetry and culture. In the 1950's, Randall Jarrell was the preeminent reviewer of poetry in this country, and he was probably the best we have had since Edgar Allan Poe. But he was more than that. Certain of his essays are unforgettable statements about the cultural situation of America: "A Sad Heart at the Supermarket," "The Obscurity of the Poet," "The Age of Criticism," and others are as exciting to read today as they were when they first appeared. More specifically focused pieces, like "To the Laodiceans" on Robert Frost, "Some Lines from Whitman," and his speculative remarks on T.S. Eliot in "Fifty Years of American Poetry," remind us of a remarkably simple truth: Randall Jarrell did more to establish our understanding of Frost and Whitman and Eliot than any other critic did.

Not everything is as we would wish it, perhaps. Jarrell did not quite go far enough on Wallace Stevens (R.P. Blackmur did); his essays on Kipling don't quite get to the point, and sometimes Jarrell's enthusiasms were excessive. At others, indeed, his lack of enthusiasm was equally so. I think he was wrong about Richard Wilbur and he was unjust to Roy Campbell, who was a great translator and occasionally "struck by lightning"—Jarrell's definition of poetic success. Nevertheless, for wit, for perception, for passion, Jarrell's essays can't be beat. They are so good they can be read for the sheer pleasure of the experience, regardless of topic. Is it possible that his essays on poetry are better even than his poems? So it seems. In addition to which, Jarrell's one novel, *Pictures From an Institution* (1954), remains a delightful satire and a brilliant performance that makes us wonder not so much at what Jarrell could have done as at what he did.

Today, something of Jarrell's role is performed by people as various as Dana Gioia, Helen Vendler, and Brad Leithauser himself; Daniel Hoffman is an utterly accomplished poet and critic and academic. Looking back at the parabola of the career of Randall Jarrell, we can see that his function was necessary, coming out of the 30's and the background of the New Criticism as he did, writing war poems in the 40's, attacking Eisenhower's America in the 50's for its complacency and philistinism, beating the drum for poetry itself, writing poetry all the way, and, in the 60's, losing his edge before the end. He was as necessary as he was ornamental, and his career, which includes self-contradictions and shortcomings, was a register of the American imagination and of American possibility. Only an American could have gone as ga-ga over Europe as he did, because only an American would have needed to. Translating Rilke and Goethe, Randall Jarrell instinctively flinched from the implications of his own celebrations of Whitman and William Carlos Williams. Jarrell's stressed sensibility, like that of James and Twain and Faulkner, showed once again that to be an American is a complex fate. That's only one reason why, more than three decades after his passing, we still need him.

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by Samuel Francis

John-John Is My Co-Pilot

Aside from the non-resignation and non-ruin of President Clinton and the non-campaign for the Republican presidential nomination, the biggest non-event of 1999 was undoubtedly the non-survival last summer of John F. Kennedy, Jr., who, true to the traditions of his family, managed to seize international headlines when his own recklessness and incompetence led to disaster—this time not only for other people, which historically has been the major accomplishment of the Kennedy clan, but also for himself. His death was indeed a sad occasion. Gifted with fame, looks, and legend, if not with any discernible talent, John-John was best known to the American public as the small boy who was made to salute his father's funeral cortege on that bare and bitter day in 1963. But that, indeed, was the extent of the young man's achievement. Being dubbed "The Sexiest Man Alive" by *People* magazine and founding a frothy gossip sheet for fashionable Manhattan coffee tables would, for any serious person, be not so much achievements as embarrassments; but for John-John, they were the pinnacles of his grown-up vocation. His death was sad because he seems to have been entirely harmless, much like any other victim of a plane accident, but not because of any significant future that his mind or character had promised.

National mourning of the death of an attractive celebrity who happened to be the son of a former president would have been entirely appropriate, but the propaganda organs of the Ruling Class were unable to leave it at that. From the moment of John-John's disappearance off the Massachusetts coast, the establishment press set off such a howl of grief and so protracted a yelp of pain that one would have thought that Pearl Harbor, the Alamo, and the Holocaust Memorial Museum had all suddenly been vaporized in a nuclear attack by white supremacists from Idaho. The *Washington Post* ran a banner headline about Kennedy's plane crash the day after it happened, and staff writer Michael Grunwald set the tone and pace of what would quickly become a national mania. "John F. Kennedy, Jr., the dashing celebrity who represents the best-known link to his father's Camelot era, is missing at sea," Mr. Grunwald moaned in what passes at the *Post* for a news story, and Kennedy's apparent death was "another startling blow for the star-crossed family that has become America's version of political royalty."

And so it went in newspapers and on news shows all over the world for a solid week and more. Not since the murder of Gianni Versace had a death in the United States brought so much lachrymose foam to the jowls of the chattering class, and not since the death of Princess Diana in Paris had the mob that pays attention to the mewlings of the chattering class had a chance to wallow and cavort in so much manufactured grief. That the mass mourning for John-John was manufactured is incontestable. For all his cosmetic prettiness and personal harmlessness, the young Kennedy was simply not much of an object of popular affection or even interest. Spontaneous mass grief for the deaths of Elvis and Jimmy Stewart, even of Diana herself, makes sense. For John-John, it just doesn't.

There were many reasons why the death of yet another Kennedy represented a swell opportunity to manufacture yet another mythical hero, not the least being the sheer volume of sales that the fabrication engendered. But there was also a political purpose, which was to formulate yet again the mythology of Camelot as the incarnation of what America is supposed to be but has never been able to become because the vast right-wing conspiracy of assassins that murdered John and Bobby keeps shooting anyone who might make it reality. The latest death of a Kennedy was thus the occasion not only for inventing another hero as fake as the one that crawled out of PT-109 during World War II but also for pouring the old myth into a new bottle from which the mass mind of the New America will be able to swig its fill of cultural and political fantasy.

One of the more interesting, if rather bizarre, reformulations of the Kennedy legend popped up in a long essay on "The Kennedy Myths" by Norman Podhoretz in the *Wall Street Journal* of July 29. Mr. Podhoretz, the retired editor of *Commentary* magazine, one of the founders and chief articulators of "neoconservatism," and now in his old age the *paterfamilias* of a vast spawn of talentless dimwits even less gifted than the Kennedy family, showed little interest in the death of young Mr. Kennedy but a good deal in the image of his father and his father's political legacy. As is not uncommon with neoconservatives of any generation, Mr. Podhoretz mainly managed to distort and miss the real point of that legacy, though not so much from thick-headedness, perhaps, as from a desire to repackage the Kennedy legend in a way that will be useful to neoconservative political purposes.

It was the main burden of Mr. Podhoretz's argument to claim that, while John Kennedy and his politics seemed to Mr. Podhoretz in his radical phase during the early 1960's to be a betrayal of, and an obstacle to, serious social and political change, they seem now, in the maturity of Mr. Podhoretz's wisdom as a neoconservative sage, to be not especially liberal at all. "Indeed," Mr. Podhoretz wrote, "shocking as it may sound on first hearing, the policies advocated by John F. Kennedy made him more a precursor of Ronald Reagan than of his two younger brothers"—i.e., the brutal and swaggering Bobby and the oafish Ted.

It is indeed shocking at first hearing, but Mr. Podhoretz makes a reasonably good case for this claim. Like Reagan, Kennedy campaigned in 1960 on promises of a tax cut, an arms build-up, and a committed antagonism to communism. In Mr. Podhoretz's view, it was not John Sr. who sired the leftism that now struts up and down the cultural and political power centers of the country but his brothers:

> So little did Ted's views have in common with those of JFK that it was as though Sir Lancelot had returned from his quest for the Holy Grail and revealed that he had renounced Christianity and become a pagan.

But the resemblance between Ken-

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nedy and Reagan is largely superficial, due in part to the fact that most political figures since Kennedy, whatever their professed beliefs and parties, have been influenced by his political style and strategy and in part to the fact that most politicians who got elected president during the Cold War generally won by campaigning on much the same platform—that they would cut taxes, maintain military power and security, and smack down the Russkies if they stepped out of line.

Moreover, Mr. Podhoretz's claim that the Kennedy myth "wildly exaggerated the liberalism of its leader" is perhaps intended to reformulate the image of Kennedy himself as an icon useful for neoconservatives—more useful than Reagan, who is today largely forgotten outside the conservative cheerleader squad. But whatever Mr. Podhoretz's purpose is making this claim, he is simply wrong, and wrong in a way that suggests that he has totally failed to understand some of the major contours of American political culture today and how John Kennedy helped shape them.

It's true the Kennedy administration accomplished little in the way of legislation, federal programs, or foreign policy achievements and that most of what was accomplished politically in the early 1960's was the work of the Johnson administration after Kennedy's death. In that sense, you can't blame the liberalism of the Great Society on Kennedy, though that's a bit like saying you can't blame Lenin for the crimes of Stalin. Lenin may not have committed the same crimes, but he had no objection to doing so and would have done so had he felt the inclination or possessed the power. There is virtually nothing the Johnson administration ever did in domestic or foreign policy that John Kennedy would not have wanted to claim for his own administration.

But the deeper sense in which Mr. Podhoretz is wrong is that he misses the major impact that Kennedy had. If he accomplished nothing else, John Kennedy—or at least the spin artists, cosmeticians, hairstylists, speechwriters, ghostwriters, and just plain con men whom the Kennedys have always employed—effected a profound and enduring change in the popular culture of American politics. He did so in part by his (so I'm told) authentically charming personality and wit, in part by the social and intellectual sophistication he affected, and in part by the informality he artfully synthesized with the silly and ponderous sonorities that he habitually unbosomed in his oratory. The change Kennedy effected was the popularization of utopianism as a serious premise of American politics, and the carefully crafted Superman image of war hero, athlete, patrician, historian, intellectual, statesman, Catholic, and family man that he projected was designed to legitimize and normalize the utopianism he preached. The image suggested that the utopia he demanded and into which he sought to dragoon the nation was neither unattractive (JFK's personal charm) nor unpatriotic (war hero) nor unmanly (athlete) nor achieved at the expense of American institutions (family and faith) nor unlettered (intellectual, historian, Harvard graduate) nor low-class (patrician) but rather one fully in harness with American tradition, aspirations, and good taste. Kennedy, in short, manipulated the imagery of conservatism to legitimize utopianism. That is why the Arthurian Camelot, a manly and martial utopia, was such an appropriate metaphor for the utopian vision that Kennedy and his crew wanted to project.

It is precisely because he was successful in doing so that the virus of utopianism soon came to shape the Great Society as well as the New Left (to whom Kennedy remained a martyr) and has now infected the bloodstream of American political culture to the point that it is all but impossible for any American politician to succeed unless he endorses it. Lyndon Johnson's drippy and pedestrian political rhetoric simply took for granted the legitimacy and desirability of the grand utopian designs that Kennedy had unleashed. Reagan himself regurgitated much the same vision in his rhetorical indulgences of the "City on a Hill," an image of millennialist utopianism directly derived from a gnostic New England Puritanism, and the neoconservatism that has by now all but displaced the pre-Kennedy conservatism of Robert Taft, Joe McCarthy, and the young Barry Goldwater has also absorbed it to the degree that most of its younger exponents are not even aware that utopianism and conservatism are not compatible. Today, all politicians are supposed to see "visions," a term unmistakably connected to utopianism, and to intone neat slogans that encapsulate those visions. One of the few American politicians who did not seem to share this common utopian orthodoxy was George Bush, Sr., whose distaste for the "vision thing" betrayed his own, quite healthy view of politics as mere administration. Unfortunately, it was a view that Mr. Bush more likely acquired through his cultural illiteracy and dull sensibilities rather than any serious reflection on the nature of political man and the constraints of the human condition.

Whatever Mr. Podhoretz's purposes in trying to assimilate Reagan to Kennedy (much as Kennedy sought to assimilate his own utopianism to the imagery of conservatism and tradition), they can achieve no good result. Most of what is wrong with American politics today derives precisely from the monopolization of political dialogue by one species of utopianism or another, and all derive directly and most immediately from John F. Kennedy. Kennedy's utopianism was equivalent to a refusal to govern the nation in accordance with the rules and limits of conventional politics and is closely related to his whole family's refusal to govern themselves or others by the same rules and limits that constrain everyone else—a refusal that may help explain, more than any conspiracy theory, why so many Kennedys get shot or drive off bridges or kill themselves and their wives by flying planes they are not qualified to fly in conditions even experienced pilots would refuse to fly in.

Their utopianism, in other words, derives from the same impulse that generates the delusion that, because they are Kennedys, they can do whatever they please, and whatever costs accumulate can always be paid by somebody else. As long as the Kennedys confine the consequences of their impulses to themselves and their families, no great harm is done beyond what is visited upon those incautious enough to risk their own lives by associating with them, but their injection of the utopian virus into the assumptions and habits of American political culture has only contributed to the corruption of the nation's politics and rendered its citizens more vulnerable to the fraudulence and dangers that invariably accompany the enthronement of political fantasy. Thanks largely to them and the propaganda organs that sustain their false legend, the entire nation is now permanently embarked on a flight into a utopian haze no less impenetrable than the one John-John encountered last summer, guided by pilots no more competent than he was and no less indifferent to the dangers they invite. c

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Letter From the Northwoods

by JoAn Melchild

Just East of the Indian's Nose

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Eleven years ago, I moved to Northwest Wisconsin, a region called the Wisconsin Indianhead because it is shaped like the profile of an Indian chief. I live just east of the nose.

After a career of publishing magazines and editing newspapers in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, I decided to take a retirement job editing a newspaper in a small Wisconsin town of fewer than 2,000 people. How pleasant it would be to leave the hustle, bustle, and high crime of the city! No more daily struggles with traffic. A place where I could retire in the quiet beauty of rolling woods and lakes. I even rented a cabin near a lovely little lake eight miles from town, where my young collie and I could commune with nature.

But it didn't take long to discover that Northwest Wisconsin was a foreign country, totally unlike anyplace I had been before. And my idyllic surroundings soon revealed some problems. There were wood ticks, not the regular kind, but tiny little deer ticks that passed on Lyme disease if you weren't vigilant in getting them off. The collie got Lyme disease and could barely walk until I took him to a vet for treatment. The dog also tangled with a porcupine and got quills in his nose, got sprayed by a skunk, and raccoons kept swiping his dog food after carefully washing each piece in his water dish. A sturdy, determined, and large family of mice who had been making the cabin their home for a couple of years defied every attempt to get rid of them. A gentle doe and her two fawns came to visit frequently.

The next thing I discovered was that editing a newspaper in a highly volatile community wasn't exactly a piece of cake. If I printed anything that people disagreed with, I received an angry phone call. Some letters to the editor would have been the basis for a libel suit if I had printed them, and when I didn't print them, I received more angry phone calls. I had half of the town mad at me one week and the other half the next. Fortunately, the previous owner of the paper, who had been the editor for many years, stopped by daily for coffee and helped me avoid many pitfalls. I also discovered I did not have a nine to five job. I started receiving calls at my residence as early as 7:00 A.M. on Sunday.

Many people assume that if you are here, you have always been here, and therefore you don't need addresses or directions—other than "turn where the old cheese factory used to be, you can't miss it." For most of its lengthy lifetime, the paper had run ads without addresses, and I met some resistance from the staff when I insisted on an address for each ad. After all, I explained, some dumb out-of-towner like myself might want to find the business, and the area could use the tourism dollars.

My first deer-hunting season was memorable. Close-shaven men suddenly turned into bearded characters sporting flannel shirts and boots. As I was living in a densely wooded area, I was warned by the natives to wear orange and tie an orange scarf around my collie's neck. Or, better yet, stay indoors. When the season started, I felt like I was in a war zone. Bearded men wearing camouflage suits and blaze orange hats and carrying guns passed through my yard. Guns went off in the distance, and a few were entirely too close. I wore a bright orange sweatshirt to travel the 20 feet from the cabin to the garage. The dog was scared to death. Hunters who had shot their deer draped the animal on the fender or put it in the back of the pickup truck and stopped by a saloon in town to do a little celebrating and show off their trophy.

Then winter settled upon the Northwoods. I had only moved 90 miles northeast of the Twin Cities, but that short distance added two months to winter. It was snowing by the end of September, and the ice was still on the lakes at the first of May. The first day that the temperature was way below zero, the bathtub in my rented cabin spouted a gusher of ice and dead leaves from the drain. When I tried to call the owners, their son told me they were on a sailboat trip off the southern coast of Florida. It seems the bathtub and laundry tubs drained through a pipe onto the ground alongside the cabin. A little heat tape fixed the situation. The electric heat was a bit iffy, too, and I often came home to a very cold house. I spent a lot of that first winter on the couch covered with a heavy quilt. Sweatsuits, long underwear, wool socks, and a pair of Alaskan reindeer slippers were standard at-home apparel.

But native northwestern Wisconsinites who are snowmobilers love the snow. Snowmobile trails, all carefully groomed and marked with miniature highway signs, crisscross the area and connect with other trails in northern Wisconsin. One hearty group of men made an annual 200-mile snowmobile trip to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The restaurants and bars near the snowmobile trails do a land-office business during the snowmobile season. Rural dances bring the snowmobilers out, and I have watched them dancing the polka in their snowmobile boots, their snowmobile suits unzipped to the waist to allow ventilation, their empty sleeves twirling to the music.

When the ice thickens, ice-fishing shacks appear on the numerous lakes in the Wisconsin Indianhead region. A large lake near where I live hosts the Wisconsin state ice-fishing tournament, which attracts 1,200 fishermen. Each person is allowed to drill three holes in the ice; they may bring sleds and portable icehouses as well as their vehicles. A beer garden, weighing station, and bratwurst stand are also set up on the ice. I was extremely nervous that first winter and wouldn't drive my car out on the ice. I really expected to see the entire entourage sink into 90 feet of water, but it hasn't happened yet.

I lived through that first winter, but the cabin was sold in the spring, so I bought a 100-year-old house in town and rehabbed it. Then the newspaper was sold, so I found other work, but I stayed in Northwest Wisconsin. There are too many things going on that I would miss. There are still bears up here, and while I have only seen one (from the safety of my car), I had empathy for the man in Cameron, Wisconsin, who let his poodle out early in the morning and had a bear grab the dog from the deck. The owner tried to defend the poodle but got mauled himself. The bear took the poodle into the woods, and the dog hasn't been seen since. Another man had his

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dog out for a walk near Spooner when he heard the dog running up behind him at top speed. The dog ran right past him. When the man turned around, he found himself face to face with a black bear up on its hind legs. The man pushed the bear; the bear took a swipe and scratched him; but they both ended up going in different directions. More recently, a 14-year-old Boy Scout had to have 196 stitches after a bear hauled the boy, his tent, and his sleeping bag 78 feet into the woods.

Weddings in northwestern Wisconsin are social events. Some get carried away. A bachelor party at Murphy's Bar and Grill in Dresser, Wisconsin, turned into a 50-man bar brawl that led to 16 arrests by officers in nearly 20 units. The Dresser police chief got punched while trying to break up the brawl. There was no report on how the wedding turned out.

But newlyweds here are practical. The local Farm and Fleet store that sells farm supplies, work clothes, lawnmowers, and dog food features a bride and groom registry that is very popular. Their ads proclaim: "At last, a place for the groom to register too!"

This area still has church suppers, potlucks, barbecues, and a popular regional dish of bratwurst smothered with sauerkraut. There are old-time dances: I attended one on a farm on the Fourth of July. It was over 90 degrees, but Mr. Morgan, a one-man band, kept playing polkas, two-steps, and waltzes from his stand in a pole barn. Despite the heat, the people kept dancing—and Mr. Morgan kept playing.

The Ceska Opera House in Haugen, Wisconsin, has been in operation for over 100 years. It features variety shows by local talent, from a violin player to a college professor completely decked out in a Scottish kilt playing the bagpipes. My favorite was a lady dressed in a black cow suit, dangling a shocking pink udder while she played a trumpet solo.

Even more astounding to an out-of-towner is the way the folks up north raise money for charity. My first "chicken drop" fundraiser at a rural saloon was an eye-opener. I grew up on a farm in South Dakota, so I am familiar with the personal habits of chickens—I just never expected to be betting on them. The floor of a fenced area was marked off into numbered squares, and the participants bet on the numbers. Then a well-fed chicken was placed in the pen, and whatever numbered square the chicken relieved itself on was a winner. Since that time, I have seen a "cow drop" in a parking lot divided into squares, and a bunny drop, which was a little less predictable.

What really makes northwestern Wisconsin a special place is the people. Many are descendants of the loggers or farmers who struggled to survive in this area a hundred years ago. There is ethnic diversity, yet a proud clannishness as well. I live in an Italian community that has some of the best Italian food I have ever eaten. Another community features "Scandinavian Saturday" where the best in local Scandinavian food and crafts are on sale. People quietly work on their rural acreages growing berries, raising produce, building boats, painting, woodcarving, making pottery, designing crossword puzzles, or carving out a new golf course. There are as many stories as there are people, and it doesn't end. For a photojournalist, it is a wonderful place to be.

JoAn Melchild writes from Cumberland, Wisconsin.

Letter From Spain

by Brian Kirkpatrick

The Tribe Above Madrid

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The sun was low as the luxurious chartered bus labored up the steep dirt track to the wedding reception in the hills above Madrid. We walked up the last of the slope from the buses to the lawn in front of the hunting lodge, where we looked down on the distant city. Middle-aged men and young girls circulated among us in uniforms, carrying trays with sliced Spanish ham streaked with fat, drinks, canapés, and small sliced sausages in hollowed-out bread. As the sun set, the groom explained that the half-finished house on the hilltop behind us—the highest point in sight—was a weekend retreat for Franco that was never completed because of the dictator's death. We stayed on the lawn until dark, then we moved into the tent attached to the side of the lodge for the formal dinner.

There was a hint of the evening's message when I heard that the priest who presided at the wedding had officiated at the weddings of the bride's mother and grandmother. Surely, it should have been clear to me when the men of the *tuna*, friends of the groom wearing medieval short pants and mantles, threw their cloaks on the ground at the church door and sang to the bride and groom. During supper, the *tuna*—half fraternity, half glee club, each man a member for life—periodically burst into ribald or romantic song, the members seated at their table, playing guitars and small instruments similar to mandolins. I should have noticed that all the Spaniards knew the words and sang along. The point was obvious, but with my American eyes I couldn't see it, even when the *tuna* surrounded the bride, the groom, and their parents at the head table to sing, then made the groom stand and serenade his new wife.

After we'd eaten, the bride and groom walked from table to table with Cuban cigars, and waiters with Fra Angelica and *liquor de manzana verde* circulated among the tables. When the cigar smoke and the roar of conversation drove me out into the night, I looked down on distant Madrid and watched the fireworks of the festival of San Isidro slowly rise and bloom above the city. Finally, at midnight, the party moved into the main hall, where the skins and skulls of game hung on the walls.

The world of the bride and groom was educated, cosmopolitan, international; their guests included psychiatrists, social workers, and lawyers from Scotland, Colombia, the United States, Great Britain, and Argentina. I was in the new Europe, where half the room spoke English and many of the foreigners, Spanish. The groom spoke three languages; his father spoke five. The DJ played disco and American music from the 70's and 80's, and Americans, North and South, mixed with Europeans on the dance floor. It was the kind of dancing any American would have recognized, that formless combination of disco and frug and nameless things we don't take any time to learn, because there is nearly nothing to be learned.

But after half an hour the music changed, as Spain, having failed to reach me, resorted to a more direct method. The DJ played a passionate music one could only call Spanish: castanets, guitars, a sensuous, serious sound. Nothing was said, no announcement was made, but the Spanish women all moved to the center of the room, the men stepped

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back, and the Americans stepped away in confusion. Europe, the modern world, psychiatry: all gone. Three days in Madrid, and I was finally in Spain.

Hands in the air, their hands much of the dance, the women swirled and spun slowly. Some danced with each other, some by themselves, others pulled the 12-year-old girls onto the floor to teach them. Paco, a military psychiatrist in his 50's with a large belly, watched his wife's dancing with adoration, as if he had never seen this entrancing creature before this magical night. Barely moving his feet to punctuate her movements, he became a modest accompanist to his wonderful wife.

With their dance, the people of Spain jerked me into a world of magicians, hypnotists, gypsies, power, identity. Europe was a conceit, America a hollow thing, but Spain lived. The music started, the European face disappeared, and I was among the people who had spent seven centuries fighting the Moors, from whom they had taken this dance as finally they had taken back all of Spain. The dancers were from a particular place, with a specific history, a great and long and difficult history. Each dancer was a woman, not a person, and those who admired her were men.

The dance was intensely sensual and utterly proper. The few men still on the floor danced with their wives; mothers danced with daughters. Paco, whose own mother lived with him, stood entranced by the mother of his children. His intense love for his wife was bound to and by his church, his mother, his children, and his friends. His love was both proper and erotic, his pleasure wrapped round with stability, his self-control integrated with vibrant, pulsing life and love. When Paco talked to me that night, he didn't use the word for wife; instead he said *tu mujer*—your woman—his choice of words reflecting the fact that her womanliness was the issue.

As the women danced, an American girl of 20 walked by. She had a tattoo on the nape of her neck, and on her lip there was a faint scar where once she had worn a small stud. Tonight, her hair was a shade between orange and pink. "Will somebody tell me why there are only women out on the dance floor?" she demanded of me. She was angry, sure that if only women were dancing, someone was being oppressed. I thought they had been liberated.

"There's a rule about this," I said. "You don't know it, and I don't know it, but they all do, and they're following it. We used to have this, but we've lost it. These people are a tribe."

Later that night, I asked Cuca, a physician from the northern city of Oviedo, about the dance. Not knowing the word for tribe in Spanish, I struggled to convey the idea of what I'd seen. "I'm from a nation, a country. But you are a people."

With the same gesture and the same expression I'd seen the new bride use when she was teased by the groom, Cuca raised a finger and wagged it back and forth. "No," she said in Spanish. "We are one blood." There might be Basques or Catalans who would disagree with her. But there were few Basques or Catalans among the women dancing on the floor.

Leaving the reception, I mentioned the dancing to the groom as we stood on the small porch of the hunting lodge. "Europe is nothing," I said. "The music started, and all of that disappeared."

He was a little drunk and was saying goodbye to friends he wouldn't see again for months. Some, he would never see again. Scientist, physician, psychiatrist, he beamed, lighting up the night. "I love that kind of thing!" he roared.

My progressive American friends would say that to belong to a tribe is an evil thing, that tribes are the cause of discrimination, pogroms, and war. They would cite Bosnia, Kosovo, the Kurds in Turkey, the Hutus and Tutsis, the Cypriot Greeks and Turks. I might reply that there are tribes who make good neighbors: the Swiss, the Amish. I live in a neighborhood where I am surrounded by Orthodox Jews. When I run at night, I wave and say hello to them. They seldom answer or even acknowledge me, but I know I am safe, even from their adolescents, who walk to temple with their parents. My friends would say such tribes are the exceptions, safe only because they are few in number. That line of debate is sterile.

Better to say that without such belonging, we decline into the things that America has become. If we belong to nothing, we become no one. Our marriages fail, our streets are unsafe, our children become lost and go to their schools to kill each other. Our erotic love cannot be stable; what stability there is has little life. Better to say there is no escape from this dilemma, that this is our tragedy. This is who we are.

A second American woman in her early 30's, never married, came up to me soon after the Spanish women had danced. She was sweating a little from dancing herself. I had never seen her so excited. She was a social worker who thought herself progressive, and I wondered if she would agree with the American girl who had been so disapproving. Hesitantly, I asked her if she had seen

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what happened when the music began.

"Yes!" She was thrilled.

We talked for some time. She thought we Americans had never been a tribe; I told her I thought that once we had. Whether or not I was right, she made the wisest remark of the night. She was joking when she answered me, but spoke with utter sincerity. Up on her toes, nearly hopping with excitement, she said, "I want to be in a tribe!"

So do we all.

Brian Kirkpatrick is a physician who lives in Baltimore, Maryland.

Letter From Green Bay

by Michael Kuehl

Packing the "All-America City"

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Perhaps one can forgive Vernon Taylor for indulging in a bit of self-aggrandizement. After all, as the *Green Bay Press-Gazette*'s newest "diversity" columnist, he's now a recognizable face, a household name, a minor celebrity in a fabled National Football League city. His opinions on race, culture, and politics are read by tens of thousands of people. A portly middle-aged black man with a short Afro and scraggly mustache, Taylor debuted in May 1999 with a column entitled (predictably) "Green Bay Enriched by Growing Diversity." As one of the first blacks, Packers excepted, to live and work in Green Bay, he portrayed himself as an historic figure, a harbinger of demographic transformation, a symbol of progress and diversity and multiculturalism.

Not surprisingly, his coming to Titletown was a result of affirmative action.

> I came to Green Bay, as so many of us as people of color do, for opportunity . . . There was a position open, resulting from the transfer of a friend, at GMAC. Affirmative action was alive and well in the early 1970's, so it was recommended that I be hired.

He arrived from Texas on October 27, 1974, with a trunk, suitcase, and $28, and, as he puts it, "the rest is history." But, alas, the Green Bay of old was as "white" as Oslo or Dublin or Helsinki and, moreover, benighted and philistine; apart from the Packers—the legends of Curly Lambeau, Don Hutson, Vince Lombardi, Bart Starr, the "Ice Bowl," the first Super Bowl champions—a place indistinguishable, racially and culturally, from such "cowtowns" as Fargo, Sioux Falls, Duluth, and Cedar Rapids. "To my surprise," he repines:

> I discovered that Green Bay was a rural-blue collar community that was 99.75 percent white. Not knowing, most people would assume that a professional sports city like Green Bay would be more urban, cosmopolitan and racially diverse. There was very little that I could identify with. The Oneida Tribe of Indians was the only ethnic group of major proportion.

Twenty-five years later, Green Bay is not dramatically more "cosmopolitan." In some ways, it is more "urban"—more crime, gangs, drugs, poverty, overcrowded jails, and traffic congestion. And it is far more "racially diverse." "As we enter into the year 2000," writes Taylor, "thousands have followed since my arrival in 1974." How many thousands? How much "diversity"?

On Christmas Eve 1996, in a paean to immigration, the *Press-Gazette* reported:

> In this area, 2,112 legal immigrants—most Asians—have come to Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Oconto and Shawano counties the past 10 years. In addition, 3,000 to 4,000 Hispanics—including an estimated 1,000 illegal immigrants—have moved into the region.

The editorial did not mention the source or year of such estimates. Unless dated by two or three years, however, the numbers were a gross underestimation. For by this date, a week from 1997, the population of Hmong and Lao in Brown County alone far exceeded 2,112.

According to a pamphlet distributed by the United Way of Brown County, "Brown County's total Southeast Asian population is estimated around 4,200. Of this total, approximately 86% are Hmong, 13% are Laotian, and 1% are Vietnamese." And less than three years later, the Hispanic population may have reached 15,000, including thousands of illegal immigrants. "At the moment," writes Tom Perry in a pro-immigration editorial for the *Gazette*:

> no one knows for certain just how many people with ties to Central and South America live in Green Bay . . . Estimates range from 6,000 to 10,000 people. The 2000 census should bring the number in sharper focus.

Last year, a TV anchorwoman said that there were 10,000 Hispanics in Green Bay, and that their numbers are expected to double in four to five years. But this assessment might have been an underestimation. "Because census data is old and many new Hispanic residents are difficult to track," writes Jim Kneiszel in the *Press-Gazette*:

> the ethnic populations in Green Bay are an official mystery. But anecdotal evidence points to dynamic Hispanic growth and smaller gains in Asian growth . . . [T]he department of refugee migration and Hispanic services for the Archdiocese of Green Bay estimates there are 10,000 Hispanics in the city and 15,000 in greater Green Bay. According to Barbara Biebel of the Archdiocese, there are about 5,000 Asian residents in the area.

The most illuminating and portentous statistic is the number of nonwhite students in Green Bay's public schools. "In Green Bay," write the editors of the *Press-Gazette*, "white enrollment in the public schools was 82.8 percent last year compared to 92.3 percent in 1985. Hispanic, black, Asian and American Indian student populations all increased." Put inversely, minority enrollment in Green Bay's public schools more than doubled in ten years, from 7.7 percent in 1985 to 17.2 percent in 1995.

Roughly half of the Asian and Latino students cannot speak English. According to the *Press-Gazette*:

> This year, about 1,800 of Green Bay's 19,500 public school students can't speak English well enough to succeed in the classroom. Most are part of an influx of Asian and Hispanic immigration and migration

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that has increased the percentage of nonwhite students to 21 percent this year from 8 percent in 1986. Last year, 1,711 students speaking 24 non-English languages were enrolled.

Currently, the metropolitan area of Brown County (Green Bay, De Pere, the suburbs) has a population of approximately 200,000. The city of Green Bay has roughly 97,000 residents—a figure that has remained more or less constant for years since, without annexation, the city cannot expand in area or increase dramatically in population. Thus, 30 or +0 years into the next millennium, Green Bay, only yesterday "99.75 percent white," may be a minority-majority city. And not because of the migration of Vernon Taylor and his fellow blacks or because of large increases in the Native American population, but because of immigration and the invasion of thousands of Asians (overwhelmingly Hmong/Laotians) and Hispanics (overwhelmingly Mexican).

"Green Bay, a three-time winner of the Super Bowl, is now a two-time winner of the All-America City Award," crowed the editors of the *Green Bay Press-Gazette*. "Green Bay first won the All-America city designation in 1964 because of its community-based attack on air and water pollution." But 35 years later, the criteria are different. As Stephen Bruss wrote in the *Press-Gazette*:

> The All-America City Award is presented by the Civic League and Allstate Insurance Co. It recognized grass-roots efforts to solve community problems, *and is especially focused on youth and diversity* [emphasis added] . . . Green Bay highlighted three programs in its application and presentation. They were Coalition to Promote Respect, Partners in Education and Urban Partnership.

Programs all relating, one should note, to problems of race and immigration. Thus Green Bay won the award for its efforts to solve problems that just a decade or so ago didn't even exist. Ironically, Green Bay had to experience the problems that accompany high levels of third-world immigration—serious crime, gangs, increased poverty, deteriorating neighborhoods, racial animosity—before it could be named an "All-America City." In many ways, the vitiation of the "quality of life" was a prerequisite for victory. And now, for two years, it can use the award to promote the city, encourage tourism, attract more businesses, and welcome more immigrants.

According to Clinton Smith, an African-American businessman, "Diversity was the key to winning the award. The delegation was led to the podium for its presentation Saturday by the Oneida Tribe of Indians singers and dancers, *and more than half of the delegation members were minorities* [emphasis added]."

Interesting, isn't it? For once, insufficient racial diversity is not "un-American."

Michael Kuehl writes from northeastern Wisconsin.

Letter From the Argentario

by Andrei Navrozov

The Man From Uncle

◆

Now that I think of it, I realize it was my own poor mother who told me that there is much too much food in these letters. Listen my only begotten, she complained by telephone from New York, what with all your extravagant food descriptions, delightful food tropes, and revealing food analogies, you probably don't even have half a minute to wolf down a ham sandwich leaning over the kitchen sink. She does not understand Italy, my mother. Here the sociology of food *is* sociology, and the New York equivalent of instructing the cook or choosing the restaurant is meeting with your banker or broker. After all, just because all those Americans talk about money incessantly does not mean they don't make it hand over fist.

Consider Martin Frankel, the cybernetic master of disguise who seems to have disappeared from the face of the earth, to say nothing of Greenwich, Connecticut, with two billion dollars. Does anyone suppose *he* used to talk about money as if he didn't have any? Well, I'm the Martin Frankel of *spaghetti con astice alla catalana*, nay, its Willi Münzenberg, its Kim Philby, and every half-decent cook within the 50-mile radius of Porto Ercole has come to beware my dangerous attentions. That's just the way it is over here, in the hard, ruthless, man-eat-lobster world that is the Tuscan coast in summertime.

Even the Central Intelligence Agency, by far the world's dimmest bunch of ruffians, is beginning to catch on to the fact that eating is more than the traditional Italian form of thinking: Increasingly, it is the fashionable European alternative to spying. Perhaps they are now even using James Jesus Angleton's recipe archive from the time he was stationed here—not that they'd give him any credit, mind you—and then P2, of course, must have supplied them with some useful little menus, especially of Sicilian dishes. Whatever the reason, spook activity around Harry's Bar in Venice, as well as around its Mark Birley namesake in London, is said to be at its highest in years, with types like Peter Jacobs and Thomas Corbally invariably getting the best tables. Chic restaurants, for the American spook community, are now what bookshops used to be for agents of the Comintern. Who can ever forget the Zeitgeist in Shanghai, where Richard Sorge used to buy his beach thrillers?

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Anyway, Father Jacobs is described by the press here as "the strange priest tied to the fugitive financier Martin Frankel." A Jewish convert to Catholicism and now *un prete da jet-set* with a parish in Rome's Trastevere, Jacobs appears to have been in trouble before, with the archdiocese of New York, for opening a swanky restaurant of his own called The Palantine. Tom Corbally, a partner in Kroll Associates, who introduced history's biggest thief to Jacobs in the first place—along with Tom Bolan, Robert Strauss, and a host of other political notables—is known in England as "the man who uncovered the Profumo scandal." Having dined with Corbally a number of times, I can testify that he, too, knows a thing or two about linguine with clam sauce, and how to tuck in a well-starched napkin.

And speaking of dim, I simply cannot resist the following rosy reminiscence. Fifteen years ago, when I was courting a rich man's daughter, Kroll Associates was paid a commensurately large amount of money to find out everything there was to know about me. An inconspicuous larrikin in a beige trench coat arrived to interview some people I knew, and before answering any of his questions, they naturally asked him what the whole thing was about. "Mr. Navrozov is applying for a job," the spook ventured in his best tones of sweet dulcimer, "and we're doing a check of his personal background." Needless to say, no sooner was the three-letter word out of his mouth than every member of the assembled company fell over laughing: "Navrozov applying for a job! Come on, own up, you're a private investigator! And a lousy one at that!" The moral of the story, I suppose, is that while American spooks will not become more bright by eating in fancy restaurants, they may, given enough time and two billion dollars spending money, become a little more worldly.

But enough dark hints and playful imputations. Now begins the main strand of this troubled narrative, because Anna, our cook of the last three cloudless seasons here, has just got herself a regular job. This, you understand, is the kind of tragedy that can only happen in an Italian resort town, at the exact point of contact between the always undeserving rich, meaning the summer people, and the frequently idle poor, those who live here all year round. "Anna! How could she? After all we've done for her!" The reader can add whatever boilerplate cries of outraged virtue seem apposite. So, wiping off my man-eat-lobster smile and putting on the conspiratorial air of perfect nonchalance, I had to go out and investigate the surrounding countryside in search of a new cook. Even in flowered shorts tight around the belly, I'm sure I looked like the man from Kroll.

The first applicant, much recommended by the uncle of one friendly restaurant owner, displeased everybody by arriving at the house a good hour before the scheduled audition—yes, *prova* can thus be solemnly translated—and was without an apron. Even more alarmingly, she looked like a real witch. At first I tried to rationalize, of course, by recalling the perfectly charming sorceress from Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* who gathered wild herbs by the light of the moon and very probably had an excellent way with light summer soups, but was finally dissuaded when I overheard Giovanna muttering to herself what sounded like magic spells while being shown around the kitchen. Also, the contralto in Verdi was always young, raven-haired, and buxom, whereas the real witch was not. In fact, she was extremely thin, and I'm not so deracinated as to forget that in my native tongue the word "thin" also means "evil."

Without so much as a fair trial, Giovanna was told a white lie. Our friendly restaurateur informed her that the rich Russian gentleman had found somebody else for the job, whereupon, having taken the usual precautions and reassuring himself all the while with one or another of the great honeyed mantras of meliorism, the man from Kroll went out again among the shadows of Mediterranean night. This time, the applicant was recommended, funnily enough, by the owner of a famous restaurant in nearby Ansedonia called *La Strega*, which means "The Witch." Graziella, who came only 15 minutes late for her appointment and wore an apron, was a good deal more comely and not nearly as crazy as Giovanna, yet in some strange, intractable way she seemed to be the witch's younger, healthier, and slightly less jaundiced sister. She was nonetheless given her *prova*, and I must honestly say that on the opening night the aubergines in our plates had been fried so delicately that the audience wept tears of contrition.

But then, like a summer storm out of a clear blue sky, an unexpected telephone call put an end to that bout of love and repentance. It was the witch Giovanna, shouting obscenities into the receiver, to the effect that she knew just what we'd been up to, that she wouldn't let us get away with it, no, not for anything, that she'd given us the best years of her life, well, hours anyway, and gas for the car, and now we're lying and saying we hired somebody else, when in fact we only found Graziella yesterday. I felt at once that all my conspiratorial techniques had failed me miserably, that I had been followed, observed, perhaps secretly taped. "But . . . how did you know? . . . " I stammered out the pathetic plaint of every exposed spy in history. "Because Graziella is my sister, that's how, you numbskull!" came the reply.

So Graziella had to be fired too, to avoid complications, and both had to be paid off in a rather generous way. Despite this act of largess, admittedly tainted by cowardice, a few days later a group of houseguests returning from the beach found two enormous black cats barring the front gate of the villa. They said they had never seen anything quite like it, and I understand exactly what that dark portent means.

It means, among other things, that my mother is right to worry about what her sole begotten is eating.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

LIBERAL ARTS

BEAUTY IS ONLY SKIN DEEP

"What makes a woman beautiful? Celebrities such as Trisha Yearwood, Courteney Cox and Gloria Steinem each answer this probing question in a new documentary film. Six women also share their stories of personal discovery and self-awareness, including an HIV-positive woman who adopted five children and a woman who overcame racial discrimination and abuse to live a rewarding life. This film is sponsored by Oil of Olay and is meant to boost self esteem in women and girls."

—*from a press release for* I Am Beautiful, *a Lifetime network film.*

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LITERATURE

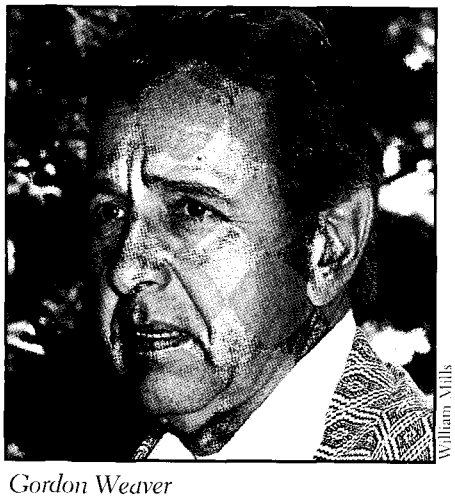
Wisconsin Apocalypse

by William Mills

Since I was going to fish in the Northwoods of Wisconsin, I decided like any bookish person to read some books about the place. I expect I own all of Gordon Weaver's ten or twelve books, and I went digging through them again to see which ones were set in Wisconsin. Besides growing up in Wisconsin, Weaver lived a long time in Mississippi and then Oklahoma, and some of his fiction is set in those two states. I re-read his novel *Circling Byzantium*, where the action takes place in Milwaukee and upstate in the resort area around Wautoma. Then there are the short stories in his collection *Such Waltzing Was Not Easy*, set around wild and woolly Hayward in the Northwoods.

Asking around, I came up with the name of Anthony Bukoski, a short story writer who lives in Superior, whose grandparents were Polish immigrants. He has written two collections of stories which are jewels, *Children of Strangers* and *Polonaise*. A few of these stories reflect his Marine experience while serving in Vietnam, but the rest are about Superior and its peoples: Poles, of course, but Jews, Finns, Germans.

Since I was born in Mississippi and reared in Louisiana, much of the world



William Mills

Gordon Weaver

Weaver and Bukoski write about is like a foreign country to me. There were largely Celtic and African people in the Mississippi I can remember, and in Louisiana Cajun French and Italian as well. I remember being in a school play with a kid I thought was German because he had a slight accent and only discovered as an adult that he was a German Jew whose family had made it out in the late 30's. I feel sure there must have been some Poles and other Germans, but we did not know about them. Thus in World War II, there were no problems like the ones in St. Louis, Chicago, or Wisconsin, where there were many Germans. In St. Louis, streets with German names were often renamed, one after General Pershing. When Germany invaded Poland, my family had been living briefly in Buffalo, New York, and I remember my father saying that we must return to the South now that there was going to be a war. For me, then, Milwaukee and northern Wisconsin have the fascination of another world.

Most of the stories by both writers have urban settings, and even when hunting, the woods, or Indians come into play, the characters always return to town. In *Circling Byzantium*, families come from Milwaukee or Chicago to a lake resort but must return to the city to make a living. One old character observes that the resort is there "to separate a Yahoo from his money during his annual two weeks free of the chains they use to keep them at their machines in Chicago and Milwaukee factories." This same character, Leland Spaulding, Jr., was a boy before World War I and remembers the lake area as serene and idyllic, with only five or six cottages around the lake. But all this will change later, none of it for the good. Meanwhile, his family goes to a bar and restaurant, Otto Pfaff's Moose Inn, where on display is the head of the last moose killed in Wisconsin, a telling icon.

"Granger Hunting," Weaver's story set around Hayward, concerns a divorced father trying to re-establish connections with his sons, meeting them at his hunting camp in the wild Northwoods. The father tries to teach his youngest son to track and kill deer, but the whole attempt fails. The boy loses the compass, the father is lost, and an Indian has to guide them back.

William Mills

Anthony Bukoski

The presence of Indians is felt in the stories of both writers. In Weaver's work, the Indian still hunts (often illegally) and possesses woodscraft. In Bukoski's stories, some of the old ways are still there, but so is the alcohol and the tension over treaty rights and fishing. At the fringes of Bukoski's town of Superior there is still hunting. In the bizarre story "Dry Spell," a one-time Catholic deacon is now freelancing as a priest. He hears confessions and does spiritual healing for his neighbors. The Catholic faith has fallen on hard times in Superior, with only one church left (at least in the story), and it is too far away for the rural people. This freelance priest has bought the statues of the closed churches and lined them up on his property. As part of absolution for a client, he takes the "penitent" through a grove of birches, where the client is horrified to see a deer hanging.

> The deer's carcass has been
> gnawed. The one dog, the tan one,
> is at the chest now. The two black
> dogs are full of blood. "Things
> seem more direct with these boyce.
> The boyce run down weak deer,
> kill them, feed right on the blood
> with the crows and other eaters.
> Humans create sin but don't taste
> God's Blood. When the wild
> boyce eat right in front of us what
> they found, they are a lesson to us
> about His Body."

It is the Polish-American world and Superior that Bukoski focuses on primarily, and very often it is not a happy place. The iron ore and coal industry that had made the city a bustling port have fallen on very hard times. Many people are on welfare, and only the bar business seems

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to thrive. Tower, the main street, is lined with bars, most of them full. Bars are the setting for much of the work of both writers. In Bukoski's very dark story, "The Tomb of the Wrestlers," a 19-year-old character, Bob Harris, imagines a postcard for Superior.

> Weeds that grow over rusted tracks . . . no diesels slowing for the crossings . . . no ore boat whistles ever piercing the foggy noon . . . steel work ain't good anymore. This is Superior, a town where the only thing left are the drinkers and drunks.

Another postcard:

> Superior, Wisconsin, pop. 28,000, has two, actually three things to set it apart. It has 1) the highest rate of alcoholism per capita for any city of its size in the country; 2) the "World's Largest Freshwater Sandbar," which is a long sandy beach bordered by the lake on one side and a bay on the other; and 3) the "World's Largest Ore Docks," which are three in number, but only one in actual use.

Harris helps his father in the bar and is propositioned by a man who can offer only a box of government cheese. "It's all I've got. No money left, and I heard you were an understanding kid." Harris refuses on the grounds that he has to have at least beer money. Incidentally, Harris' mother was a prostitute for many years, working at 314 John St. In a darkly comic scene, an old Canadian sailor had propositioned Harris three years earlier, and the homosexual experience is described in nautical terms such as "'Steady now . . . steady as she goes. All ahead one-third?' 'All ahead,' I repeated." As I said, it is a dark story.

The world gets darker still when the old people's stories are told, as in "Mrs. Burbul." During World War II, Mrs. Burbul had been held prisoner in a camp where the cook was Polish. He made her strip and raped her, rewarding her with the better cuts of horsemeat, a piece of potato, a rutabaga. When the guards ran away at the end of the war, she and others pulled the cook down, spit on him, kicked him, and likely killed him with a shovel. Now these memories haunt her, and she continues to ask for forgiveness, wandering endlessly about the fields.

There are other powerful stories that convey the alien experience of being an immigrant while yearning for the old country of one's parents, one's friends. One character sums up the anguish in "The Korporal's Polonaise."

> Above us, in a church that is to close, the despairing priest prepares for his last Palm Sunday as I open the music box on the table and find a lock of my father's precious white hair. Now the Polonaise he loved begins to play, but we cannot go back to him. We cannot return to the Old Country. All we have are graves and crosses.

The partition of Poland in 1939, the deportation of 1.7 million Poles from the Soviet sector, and the Nazis' transportation of 1.3 million Poles to Germany for use as slave labor in factories provide the background for "Polack Joke," the third section of Weaver's *Circling Byzantium*. An old Polish immigrant and bar owner, Mary Janka, receives an answer to the last of her many inquiries about her family. She is found crying one day by her employee, Romy Lewinski, after a refugee identification committee wrote that "What was left of her family had disappeared, must be presumed dead."

Lewinski is not a pretty Pole, but he is a very believable character. He is part of the force that destroys the tranquillity of the lake at Wautoma. He inherits the bar from Mary Janka, but no money. Of the $111,000 she saved, she left some for perpetual Masses for herself at Saint Casimir's, $5,000 to the Milwaukee County Democratic Council, and the balance was split down the middle between the Polska-Amerikanski Refugee Relief Committee and the Little Sisters of the Poor. Yet Lewinski makes a go of the place, sells it to buy the rundown resort at Wautoma, and proceeds to turn that into the tacky thing Americans have come to know as "fun parks"—a post-Disney, Eisner version.

Instead of retreating into memory as Spaulding does, Lewinski is a go-getter, a "man with a plan," a futurist who has no roots in the community of this summer resort and is there only to make a killing. Spaulding remarks to another character, "I've yet to meet the man could define the word 'progress' to my satisfaction." The town fathers of Wautoma are complicit in Lewinski's big plans, for they see all the taxes he's going to pay and the jobs he's going to create.

In Bukoski's work, as in Weaver's, there are the overriding motifs of time and the falling away of the world which was the first half of this century. Not only has Poland receded for the immigrants, Superior itself has declined and decayed. Much of Bukoski's fiction is a meditation on mutability and a skepticism about the future. This meditation

A TRAVELER'S GUIDE

When Up North, you can stay at one of three log cabins on Highway 27 in Brule, buy flies, hire a guide, and get tips on fishing all at Brule River Classics. For breakfast, try the Belgian waffle at the Twin Gables. Down U.S. 2 a few miles try Green Top, an old highway restaurant with a friendly bar, good lake trout, and fresh pie.

There are conventional motels in Iron River (the least chain-like is Rustic Roost), but you can also put up at the Trout Haus, a B&B right on the Iron River. The proprietor is a wildlife biologist who told us tales of expeditions to New Guinea and South America as he fixed us a delicious breakfast in his kitchen. In town, he and his wife also operate Java Trout, where you can buy muffins, cheese, smoked fish, and better espresso than in cities a hundred times the size (I speak from experience). Yes, it seems like a place for Yuppies, but there aren't any in Iron River.

The same building is home to the White Winter Winery, which is really a meadery, because everything they make appears to be a honey wine. I do not like mead and after drinking it in one or two forms had sworn that only Beowulf could stuff that swill down my throat, but I ate (or rather drank) those words when I tasted their Black Mead (made with black currents and honey). I took several bottles home, and although the family's enthusiasm was not quite so high as my own, they all drank it—which is more than usually happens when we bring back fruit wines. For a lake woods pizza experience, try Finnell's in Lake Nebagamon—have a drink there and one at Bridge's to be fair.

No trip to the Northwoods would be complete without a stop in beautiful S'perior. Only the downtown has been spoiled by ill-advised attempts at urban renewal. Be sure to buy a copy of Anthony Bukoski's *Polonaise*. If enough people buy his books, he will be able to move to Louisiana and pretend to be Cajun.

—*Thomas Fleming*

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on time becomes an obsession for one character in "The World at War."

> Living with my parents in Superior, Wisconsin, I begin to collect timepieces. In my room are a Sessions wall clock, a Westclox Baby Ben with two alarms, a Sunbeam with a lighted dial to shine the way—these and a few other watches and clocks, all of them wound and running. "Why you don't study time for a living?" [his father] asks.

This is exactly what Bukoski and Weaver have done as artists, study time for a living.

Bukoski's work is dense with allusions and direct references to time, but I shall single out only two more representative stories. In "Tango of the Bearers of the Dead," the principal character is a Polish immigrant, a woman, who has committed adultery and whose memory of this and her 50 years of marriage is blackened by what she has done. Her husband, now dying in a hospital bed in Superior, had suffered great travail when he deserted from the Russian army and worked his way to join her in Wisconsin, and her adultery always stood between them, though he remained a faithful husband and provider. A watch given by her father, to be given to her husband, had been given to her lover who sold it in a pawn shop; now the watch symbolizes that time long ago and the 50 years since her betrayal. She says to her grandson who is insistent on hearing about his grandfather: "I want you to forget . . . all the things that embarrass a family and make it small. Bear your dead some other way. I am done remembering." She considers silently, "Where do things go when they're no longer remembered?"

The title story, "Children of Strangers," is built around a church party honoring a nun who has spent her life teaching the Polish students of St. Adalbert's School. The neighborhood of St. Adalbert's, like many Catholic neighborhoods in America, has declined and been taken over by strangers. One of the old parents wonders to herself, Where do these children of strangers come from—Brule? Iron River? The party is held in the gym, and during it two ruffians enter, ignore the old people, begin to shoot baskets, then help themselves to the food on the tables. For one character in particular, it is a traumatic, vision-changing experience—the two young thugs look right through him.

> His thinking about the future . . . changes now. More and more in the coming days, he sees in this vision of a world without depth, riots will be tearing cities apart, and presidents and dignitaries will be seized and put upon. . . . Now he's suddenly becoming frightened of looking ahead.

I did not catch any big fish in Wisconsin (all would have lived comfortably in a goldfish bowl), but I enjoyed canoeing the Brule and listening to its rushing water while my guide abandoned me looking for dragonflies for his collection. However, I fished two big literary talents and listened to them. What we hear in both artists are the clarion sounds of apocalypse. Both wield fine satiric weapons and possess a rollicking comic humor, including ethnic humor, in spite of the speech police. (Recently, an East Coast editor rejected a friend's story because she used Southern black speech for some of the characters—he scolded her by explaining that his magazine does not do that anymore.) Some may find the satire and the action in Weaver and Bukoski dark, a bit much for their genteel tastes, but where shall they turn? To Eastern European history of the last hundred years, or the transcript of the impeachment of our current President? Each of these artists has tracked the spoor of those in his neck of the woods, and from the detritus of crudity and cruelty, hate and love, each has fashioned fables that may lead to our redemption.

William Mills, a novelist and poet, is the editor of Images of Kansas City. *His latest work of fiction is* Properties of Blood.

EDUCATION

Computer Cult

by Marian Kester Coombs

Forget Back to Basics, language immersion, New (and newer and newer) Math, the seven types of intelligence, Learn by Doing, the Great Books, discovery learning, arts-based education, Core Values, self-esteem, and even phonics. American parents have found a new savior for their children's imperiled education: the computer.

All across the country, parent-teacher associations and *ad hoc* parent groups are feverishly raising money and/or jawboning education budgets to install banks of computers in the public schools, wangling space away from other school uses to accommodate such installations, systematically hooking up every classroom to at least one computer, and diverting textbook and other monies to purchase software. PTA meetings resound with the clamor for "computer literacy," "21st-century information skills," and the like. With a spirit not unlike that of their stoic pioneer ancestors, these parents have accepted what appears to be the inarguable, lowered their heads, and pressed their shoulders resolutely to the new wheel.

Whether this craze for getting schools "on line" will pay off in better educated students is almost never debated. Parents have been instilled with a raw terror of their children being left behind by the economy of technological imperialism—which, after all, is not a futuristic scenario but a palpably brutal ongoing process. Anything promising to lessen this terror is embraced with hot relief.

Parents nationwide are pouring millions of their own money into school computerization. The federal government's response has been to cry, "No fair!" and point fingers trembling with indignation at school districts where lower incomes (and lower parental commitment) mean less outside money to fund the new cult. And the feds' solution, of course, has been to create a typical boondoggle with two billion dollars (so far) in taxpayers' money, called "e-rates," to subsidize poorer districts.

The two major problems with the computer cult are, first, the notion that computers can teach something that traditional teaching cannot; and second, the notion that the Internet is an information resource above and beyond anything human society has ever possessed before. Both notions are risibly false.

The uses to which computers are put at the grade-school level are particularly self-defeating. Large amounts of money are spent for software like interactive books, *KidPix*, *Kid Works*, *Oregon Trail*, and *Storybook Weaver*. *KidPix* and *Kid Works* are used to get the students to "read," "draw," "write," and "do math." After all the "high-tech" folderol is dispensed with, each of these activities would have been more profitably conducted with paper and pencil and a good

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book. Example: Children are asked to "draw" a line segment onscreen and label it "AB." Because they do this electronically, it is considered superior to a manual exercise. In what way? Quite apart from the extra time involved in lining up and marching down to the computer lab, logging on, opening the program, etc., there is far less teacher supervision of what is supposedly being learned.

Some, such as Clinton apparatchiks, would argue that the computers ought to be in the classroom already, not "down the hall." When that is the case, however, we witness an even further breakdown of classroom coherence, as kids line up to play at the terminal(s) while the teacher struggles to keep a general lesson going. In other classrooms, volunteers pull small groups of kids out of class for special computer sessions in a continuous pattern of disruption reminiscent of Short Attention Span Theater.

This suggests another problem with the whole cult: the sheer amount of teaching time being sucked into the sacred black hole of Technology. Across the country, teachers are using instruction time not only to be trained on computers but to plan activities, lessons, pedagogy, and "integrated curricula" around them. Computer systems are constantly changing, being updated and upgraded; bright ideas for transforming pencil-and-paper lessons into "electronically enhanced" exercises are being lobbed fast, furious, and nonstop at the teaching profession. Many teachers feel they are on a treadmill, losing ground no matter how they speed themselves up. Welcome to the workforce of the New World Order!

To return to the contradictions inherent in grade-school computer use, interactive books are not interactive. All the term means is that children can click onscreen icons as the computer reads the book to them and watch programmed pixelations or hear sound effects. The *Kid Works* program reads your own words back to you like an *idiot savant*, but at least they are your own words. With *Storybook Weaver*, the child is also supposed to type in his own story, but all the illustrations are provided from a menu of backgrounds and figures. The *KidPix* program offers such a dazzling array of graphic elements and ways of manipulating them that no creativity whatsoever is required; yet art, math, social studies, and language-arts classes all do "units" on *KidPix*. The various math programs, minus the bells and whistles, provide nothing more profound than a traditional arithmetic lesson would. And computer math is made to order for students already primed to get the answer by asking a calculator rather than their own brains.

The one grade-school use of computers that conveys an actual skill better than traditional means is the teaching of how to type. In the meantime, however, the teaching of how to write—not to mention how to draw—is heading toward extinction. Typing, which used to be a high-school elective, will be of use to these students when they have to type papers for high school and college, and for future jobs in the "cube farms" of TechnoCo, Inc. But what is lost by bypassing the ancient interaction of hand and eye is almost never considered.

One who has considered it is Gary Chapman, director of a technology and society research project at the University of Texas and former executive director of Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility. In a speech delivered in May 1999 to a conference on federal education policy at the Brookings Institution, Chapman noted, "It's very, very rare for me to run into a [graduate] student who is totally incompetent with computers. But it is, unfortunately, not rare for me to run into students who can't write or speak well, can't spell and have huge and alarming gaps in knowledge. I don't think computers will solve that problem." Indeed, the computer cult only exacerbates these problems.

The cult's harmful ideology spills over into everyday life whenever parents, blinded by techno-faith, allow or encourage children to play endless video and computer games. Among the effects of overexposure to this medium: hyperactivity, distractibility, impulsiveness, withering of social skills, poor nutrition and exercise habits, and atrophy of motor skills.

The mantra parents cling to is that such play is good training for the jobs of the future. That's true chiefly if the job you have in mind is desk jockey for the new push-button military or desensitized executioner of fellow students. In any case, particular job skills should be taught on the job, not in the schools, whose task is to convey cultural literacy. The abilities to read with understanding, to think analytically, to compute and calculate accurately, to write cogently, and to speak expressively are what employers are begging for in job applicants; with those abilities as a foundation, all else can be added as needed. Unfortunately, the government and its schools aren't generating this kind of "product"—the feds are much more afraid of an educated populace able to think critically than of letting the U.S. economy slide down to Third World status.

The *Dallas Morning News* reports (May 25) that, "At some schools, vocational programs are so elaborate that calling them 'shop class' is like calling a Boeing 747 a glider. There are full-bore auto shops, greenhouses, airplane hangars, day cares, photo labs, and on and on."

"I teach them things besides photography," one shop teacher is quoted as saying. "I teach punctuality. I teach honesty. I teach dependability."

That's nice, but such virtues should be taught in the home, and job-related skills should be taught on the job. If they can't be, why don't we just drop the fiction of higher education for all, revert to the European system of academic versus vocational tracks, and quit pretending that most kids are getting anything more than a grade-school-level preparation for the labor force?

Now for the second major problem: World Wide Web worship. Computers as "channels" of the fabled Internet are believed to grant instant knowledge to web surfers.

Have you ever tried to research something on the Internet? You choose a search engine, enter your keywords, and wait as thousands of pages queue up for perusal. Sometimes, more than half of the items are duplicates under slightly different listings. All times, many items have nothing to do with the object of your search, although you usually only discover this after waiting for the irrelevant page to load. Many sites that look promising either cannot be found, have moved with no forwarding address, or simply are not as advertised: Either they deliver only a disappointing smidgen of what was promised, or they are masquerading as something they are not. Many a site turns out to be the excruciatingly boring homepage of some poor *citoyen mondial* who, in the course of his virtual life, happens to mention one of your keywords. Many sites are commercial and thus only very selectively informative. And perhaps most important, an enormous number of sites contain documents whose provenance and credibility you have no means at all of judging.

In brief, you would have done better to visit the library. A mere fraction of the knowledge of mankind has been scanned

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into cyberspace, and too much of that fraction is fragmented, diluted, or vitiated by highly questionable persons for entirely inscrutable or unscrupulous reasons. The published books and magazines available at libraries or bookstores represent a much broader range of views and are far more reliable sources since the process of their production has been juried, refereed, peer-reviewed, and vetted to an extent impossible with Internet postings.

It is, admittedly, convenient to use electronic encyclopedias such as Compton's and Grolier's. But online encyclopedias are often abridged and abbreviated compared with their printed editions—and with each update more politically corrected material replaces the telling wisdom of the past. Advice: Get hold of an early-20th-century set of the Americana or Britannica and guard it with your life.

It's true that the Internet makes getting in touch with like-minded persons much faster and easier, but (for example) efforts to conduct campaigns on behalf of various political and social issues via cyberspace have, so far, failed. E-mail bombardment doesn't faze lawmakers; letters, phone calls, demonstrations, and bad p.r. do.

The worst fallacy of Web worship is the idea that "information" is somehow at one's fingertips and therefore need not be lodged in one's head. Schoolchildren are being taught that "it's just as good to know where to look something up as to memorize it." This theory renders the attempt to think rather like waving a wand over an empty top hat—if no rabbit's in there to start with, no rabbit's going to pop out. Storing facts (or whatever you want to call the mental representations of knowledge) in memory enables association, comparison, cross-fertilization, and development of ideas. Memory is the food of thought. The greater the remembered store, the richer and more complex the mind's creative process.

This is what critical thinking is all about, ladies and gents of the National Education Association. But we don't train for that anymore. Distracted from distraction by distraction, our children are the first generation in American history to be less human than the one that came before it.

Marian Kester Coombs writes from Crofton, Maryland.

FILM

In the Toyshop of the Heart

by George McCartney

The Thomas Crown Affair

Produced by Irish Dream Time and United Artists
Directed by John McTiernan
Screenplay by Leslie Dixon and Kurt Wimmer, original story by Alan Trustman
Released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

The Blair Witch Project

Produced by Haxan Films
Directed by Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez
Screenplay by Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez
Released by Artisan Entertainment

The Iron Giant

Produced by Warner Bros.
Directed by Brad Bird
Screenplay by Brad Bird and Tim McCanlies, based on The Iron Man *by Ted Hughes*
Released by Warner Bros.

The original *Thomas Crown Affair*, a 1968 Faye Dunaway/Steve McQueen vehicle, wouldn't seem a likely candidate for a remake. It was a slight, stylish entertainment that floated on the glamour of its stars and had all the impact of a soap bubble. Fortunately, the new version doesn't rely on the earlier's weightless cachet. Director John McTiernan, producer Pierce Brosnan, and their writers have re-thought the original, retaining its high-flying style but adding just a pinch of gravity for ballast.

This time the film begins with, of all things, a lesson in values. Minutes after the credits have run, we find ourselves in New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art being introduced to a Claude Monet painting from his haystack period. A teacher is lecturing her fourth-grade class on its aesthetic merits. Finding her nine-year-olds unimpressed, she shrewdly cuts to the cash. This painting, she tells the kids, is worth $100 million. Instantly, their faces ignite with interest. And so the film raises its major concern: the confusion of price with value, appearance with reality.

Enter Pierce Brosnan as Thomas Crown, the bored billionaire who will lift the Monet not for its price but for its inherent worth. His act is an implicit lesson in making value distinctions, a lesson he will pursue from the public space of commodified art to the private one of compromised relationships. And like any good teacher, he will not pretend to have the whole answer. He is wise enough to learn from his prize pupil, the insurance investigator (played by Rene Russo) commissioned to recover the painting so her clients don't have to pay its preposterous price. She is a professional who has developed her cunning at the expense of her soul. This allows her to hunt Crown, ruthlessly using passion as her weapon of choice until it unexpectedly takes aim at herself.

McTiernan is working Hitchcock territory. As in many of the master's films (most notably *North by Northwest*), crime, dishonesty, and betrayal are tropes for the endless plots and counterplots endemic to the battle of the sexes. McTiernan makes no bones about this. The pre-credit introduction shows Brosnan in the office of his psychiatrist, played (in a nod to the original) by Faye Dunaway. She wants to know if he trusts women. He makes an ironic moue and answers, "I enjoy women." She then asks him if a woman could trust him. His reply is more measured, his smile more reflective: "A woman could trust me as long as her interests didn't run too counter to my own." Then the credits roll against a stylized landscape of sinuous curves in beige, yellow, and ochre, undulating femininely across the wide screen. The stage is set. It's sexes *en garde*.

If Hitchcock is McTiernan's cinematic influence, could Alexander Pope's *Rape of the Lock* be his literary source? Here, instead of Belinda's mischievous curl, it's the misvalued Monet that gets clipped. But the effect is much the same. In both stories, a breach of propriety serves to unmask a man and woman to one another and to themselves. Shot in the precincts of Manhattan's privileged, the film's key scenes have a deluxe ambiance not unlike Pope's stylized drawing-room world in which spoiled co-

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quettes and eager beaux flirt and huff, tease and screech. Pope has Belinda lose her treasured curl, the paradoxical emblem of her desirability and her virginity, while leaning over the silver coffee pot to inhale its fumes. In the film, Brosnan flirts with Russo in an elegant restaurant, begging her permission to ask "a very personal question." "Would you," he insinuates, "like another hit of my espresso?" She rises from the table, laughing at him. "You don't really think I'm going to sleep with the man I am investigating," she mocks and flounces off to the ladies room.

Both worlds are exquisitely mannered but emotionally cold, almost inhumanly so. Style counts more than substance, manners more than morals. Who better to play Pope's updated romantic antagonists than Russo and Brosnan? Each is narcissistic glamour incarnate, all gloss and no texture, looking so finished as to be incapable of further development. In their inevitable and ridiculous sex scene, they ignore Crown's bed, rolling around on his statue-cluttered marble floor as though they were lapidary figures more comfortable with the immutable perfection of stone than with the ungainly give of a mattress. These people are more mannequin than human, and this works for the film. We are meant to see Russo and Brosnan as heartless, intensely self-regarding creatures who are properly at home in the museums and salons of the Manhattan art world. To adapt Pope just a bit, this is the "moving toyshop of the heart," a perfectly artificial stage on which the trivial and the momentous have become indistinguishable because nothing counts—nothing beyond self-interest, that is.

And there's the crux. Do these pampered, empty people have what it takes to become human? Will they both learn the lesson fully? Will she be able to distinguish value from its advertisement? Will he know intimacy and enjoy it? It's not for me to say.

While this clever entertainment is not in the same league with Hitchcock (much less Pope), McTiernan and Brosnan have aimed high. If they haven't hit their target, they've come close enough to make a very enjoyable, even memorable film.

For another lesson in the difference between value and its advertisement, we have *The Blair Witch Project*. This video-shot home movie was pre-sold through a skillfully constructed internet site, featuring an account of witchcraft and murder in the woods surrounding Burkittsville, Maryland. The film is supposed to be a documentary investigation conducted by three young people in their 20's who backpacked into these woods and never returned. All that's left is the unedited film they made over the course of several days and nights.

I went to this movie with moderately high expectations. I was looking forward to a horror film that employed suggestion and wit, rather than slime and explosions, to engage its audience. Well, there's wit behind *The Blair Witch Project*, but I suspect it's being exercised at our expense.

This thought occurred to me during the second in a series of blank screen sequences lasting two or three minutes apiece and feeling more like ten. There was absolutely nothing to watch and little more to hear beyond some supposedly frightened breathing and the rustle of forest undergrowth. We were to understand that the principals—Heather, Mike, and Josh—had been awakened in their tent by something going bump in the night and were doing their frightened best to tape it without the help of camera lights. I confess I was shaken . . . with laughter. What a hoot, I thought. These kids are as bold as the tailors who made the emperor's new clothes.

My friend Barbara, saw the film with her 19-year-old daughter and reports that the young lady, along with every other young person in the theater, was rigid with fear. "I don't get it," Barbara said. "They're used to watching people garroted, impaled, blown up, and otherwise inconvenienced in other movies. They just sit there laughing their socks off. Now this picture comes along and shows three kids wandering around some roadside woods within hailing distance of a Taco Bell, and my daughter goes catatonic. You're the film reviewer. What gives?"

Blessed if I know, but let me improvise. I prefer to believe it's a good sign. Maybe young audiences have overdosed on high-tech extravaganzas in which most of the budget is spent on the special effects that Hollywood views as box-office insurance, leaving precious little for literate scripts, convincing acting, and coherent editing. Maybe they long for stories that will make them care whether the characters retain all their body parts at the fade-out. And maybe this hunger is so strong, they've projected their hopes onto *The Blair Witch Project*'s cinema rasa.

Who knows? But there's no doubt they're talking in Hollywood's boardrooms. "Look it's simple. We're running a business, see? Return on investment. You keep your overhead down, your profits up. So why are we dumping millions on Industrial Light and Magic when these film school nerds are pulling in gadzillions with a penny-ante video shoot?"

Blair Witch II is already in the works. Of course, its budget will no doubt zoom from the original's $30,000 to the neighborhood of, say, $70 million. Hey, whaddaya going to do? Special effects. Gotta have 'em. Insurance, see?

If you've not done so already, have your children take you to see *The Iron Giant*. If there are no little ones around, take yourself. This un-Disney cartoon feature, based on poet Ted Hughes' children's book, is a delight.

Director Brad Bird opens his story in 1957. A mysterious missile whizzes through the orbit of the recently launched Sputnik and crashes in rural Maine. A 50-foot robot emerges from the wreckage, having lost his memory but not his appetite for metal, which he gratifies by chomping up every car, tractor, and girder in sight of his headlight eyes. When he makes the mistake of trying to eat an electrical power station, a boy named Hogarth cuts the juice, saving him from electrocution and winning his rust-proof gratitude.

The story has a predictable arc, but everything is done so lovingly that you won't mind. A nasty federal agent wants to destroy the giant, no questions asked. Hogarth defends his alien friend at grave risk to himself and his mother. The army's called in for a showdown and . . . but enough said. There's some sappy anti-Cold War reasoning here, as you might expect. In the background, Bird has black-and-white televisions playing films reminiscent of 50's favorites such as *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and *It Came From Outer Space*, sci-fi allegories which warned America that its Cold War paranoia was more dangerous than any perceived external threat. But the story has too much charm to hold its fuzzy politics against it. Besides, its denouement makes a spectacular case for the Strategic Defense Initiative. And what was good enough for the Gipper is good enough for me.

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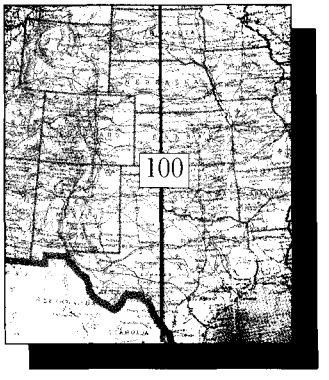
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Waiting Nights, Beastly Days



The high Colorado Rockies are like a type of beautiful woman, eye-catching without being especially interesting. Spectacularly well-endowed, they are also obvious, unsubtle, lacking in individuality and complexity, bland in their stunning perfection, with a hint of vulgarity. Or perhaps it's the sort of people who are drawn in glittering swarms to these towering fourteeners, geometrically perfect almost as icy pyramids, and the elaborate, congested playgrounds they have created around and between them that's responsible for the impression. Strung along 32 miles of Interstate 70, Vail, Copper Mountain, and Silverthorne with their sweeping greens and artificial lakes, tow lifts, ranked condominiums, trophy homes, and enough bars and restaurants to accommodate the Democratic and Republican national political conventions simultaneously, are designed for a new breed of *Homo sapiens*, one which is unable to leave its pleasures—as well as its work—behind while on vacation. In these fearsome places the communities of Rye Brook, New York, and Cherry Hills, Colorado (only 70 or 80 road miles away) have been substantially recreated, with a few bogus touches added for regional color. Snake-eyed Westchester vamps carrying pocketbooks stuffed with enough cash and credit to feed the West Slope for a week stalk the malls and discount outlets in spike heels and designer jeans, while on the golf course their husbands, cell phones clapped to their prognathous jaws and dented chins, do deals with traders in New York, London, and Hong Kong. Approaching Silverthorne from the north, along the Blue River (one angler after another dressed in several-hundred-dollar outfits from Orvis), I press on toward Leadville and points south without stopping for gas or coffee. From a previous life, I know these people. For company, I'll take a Sasquatch clan pounding logs with sticks in a wilderness clearing, any day.

At Leadville too, 10,500 feet high across Fremont Pass, the recreational season is in full swing, Tourist Class: fat families in shorts, squishy shoes, and rude T-shirts piling out of camper trailers and vans for ice cream cones, souvenirs, and newsstand copies of the latest number of *People* magazine, already waiting in the mailbox back home. If any question existed as to what is basically the slave mentality of the American people today, the uniformity of their childish proletarian dress should put it to rest. Southwest of the historic village, whose careful preservation includes the starkness—even in summer—of a 19th-century alpine mining town, another mountain range stretches, the Sawatch Range on the Continental Divide. There's 'squatches in them thar hills, where Dick McIlhenny was roused from sleep by a bellowing roar five years ago and the Forest Service is said to have experimented with greasing the posts of its most frequently pulled-up signs, hoping to record the handprints of the creatures responsible for the vandalism. (Which is harder to believe in, the reality of Sasquatch or Janet Reno?) Granite, Buena Vista on the Arkansas River; the Olympian, so-called Collegiate Peaks (Mt. Harvard, Mt. Princeton, Mt. Yale: Scale one and you're accepted tuition-free?); Poncha Springs and Poncha Pass above the San Luis River; the mysterious San Luis Valley, bordered on the east by the Sangre de Christo Mountains, where the deer and the aliens play. . . . In Alamosa I rendezvoused with Dick and at Antonito we stopped to gas up before heading into the San Juan Mountains, up toward Conejos Peak.

"Looks like you've had a lot of rain," I told the cashier. "Plenty of standing water about."

"Rained every afternoon and night for weeks now," he said cheerfully. "If this weather keeps up, the elk will start bugling now, pretty quick."

Backlit by the sun, cumulus clouds were building above the western mountains, not the kind that produce rain.

"It looks like it might be drying out finally," I suggested.

The cashier ran my card and handed it back to me. "No," he agreed, "it isn't going to rain tonight."

Outside Dick waited behind the wheel of his Ford Ranger. "It'll be dark in two hours," he said. "I'd like to be set up in camp before then."

"Well, let's try for it. I'll lead, in case the rain has made a slide somewhere and you have to back the trailer off the mountain."

The Conejos River ran high, the potholes in the dirt road above the river were full of water, and except for the horse trailers waiting at the trailheads to take the dudes out, there didn't seem to be much of anybody around. At the crossing where I stopped and turned the wheel hubs in, I walked back to speak with Dick.

"Do you suppose," I asked him, indicating a herd of cattle grazing close to the forest edge, "that rancher loses a couple of calves or a yearling or two up here every summer?"

"Could be. And he probably figures a bear or a mountain lion took it, too."

Water ran everywhere, but the granitic substrate held firm on the two-track road switchbacking above the canyon to the top of the ridge, and along it to our campsite the summer before. Dick parked in the road behind the Powder River gate, away from the treeline, and together in the fading dusk we raised the canvas tent from the camper and set up the cookstove and sink inside. "It isn't that much more secure than a regular tent," Dick remarked as we unrolled the sleeping bags on the bunk beds at either end of the camper, "but it's a little better, anyway."

We unzipped the soft plastic windows behind the screens to let the night sounds in and heated supper on the gas stove. With the loaded guns beside us we ate at the foldaway table, drinking purple wine

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from the blue Saltillo cups, and cleaned up afterward, packing in the stove again and stowing the pans, pots, and plates to clear the deck in case of emergency. Then Dick plugged the microphone into the tape recorder and pointed it toward the forest. Finally, we settled under our unzipped sleeping bags with the Bionic Ear and the night vision close at hand.

"I don't expect anything the first night," Dick said. "Let's just forget about a watch, shall we?"

"Suits me," I told him. "I've seen all the primates I want to for one day, anyway."

We slept soundly and awoke together at first light, tucking the bags around us for warmth.

"Do you hear it?" I asked, propping suddenly on one elbow above the rolled oilskin duster I was using as a pillow.

"I hear *something*, I can't tell what. It isn't the coyotes, is it? This damn tinnitus."

"No," I said, "it's not the coyotes."

The sound was the familiar half-human howl, starting with a whoop and sustaining itself like the exhalation of a trained singer, far to the southeast above the tops of the cold black forest, beyond range even of Dick's expensive microphone setup and lasting three or three-and-a-half minutes.

"Well," I added when it had ended, "that didn't take long."

"No, it didn't. Maybe we'll have an encounter tonight. If we just let it come in to us, like we did a year ago."

Armed with magnum revolvers we scouted on foot that morning through the rain that had returned in waves of low cloud to the mountains, and in the afternoon I rustled up some of the dead fir branches around and built a smokey signal fire so hot it singed the hair on my forearms and took most of my eyebrows off. Later we sat out drinking tea with the revolvers, the mike, and the Bionic Ear on the folding table before us, waiting for the brooding heart of the wilderness to announce itself. The silence was unbroken until about 6:30, when the coyotes high in the rocky bowl above started up and behind them, distant yet unmistakable, the strong assertive howl.

"I guess we've been discovered," Dick said. "Sounds to me like they're talking back and forth already."

Around seven we ate an early supper, then napped until sundown before going on watch at 50-percent alert, Dick assuming the nine-to-twelve shift while I slept.

"You'll wake me right away if you hear anything suspicious?"

"You'll be the first to know about it, I can promise you."

At 10,600 feet, the August night was chill. I slept fitfully beneath the heavy bag, unzipped for an instant exit, before I relieved Dick at midnight and lay listening to what might have been the grainy sound of the universe through the headphones attached to the Ear, or the mountains breathing in and out in the moonless dark. Three hours passed quickly, I felt wide awake and alert, and I had decided to allow Dick another hour of sleep when from the silence a gathering, rushing sound arose suddenly in the headphones, like some mysterious energy field bearing rapidly down on the camper. Like nothing at all, a burst of static, but then again like something, and coming fast. Rigid in the bed, I was considering waking Dick when I heard another sound: a sharp *click*, like one rock struck cleanly against another. The headphones roared in my ear as I threw off the sleeping bag, took Dick gently by the arm, and shook him awake.

"What is it?"

"I don't know. The rock clacking noise is back again."

He took the apparatus from me and listened, holding the dish at arm's length as he panned the invisible circumference of the dark clearing.

"I don't hear anything."

"Neither do I. It must be gone, now. But it was something."

In the morning it rained again, heavy monsoon clouds from the Gulf of Mexico blotting the peaks and the bowl below them. We drank coffee and played the crucial 15 or 20 seconds of the tape over and over. The mike had picked up what the Ear had missed: two clicks *before* the gathering noise, and in the farther distance five measured knocks, like someone pounding a log with a stick.

"So what do you think?" I asked finally.

"I don't know. Let's take a walk and get away from here for a little while."

Game trails in the woods below the camp, thickly printed with the tracks of elk, converged on a grassy meadow trampled by sharp hooves and flattened by bedded animal bodies. At the forest edge, the tall weeds behind a down log lay crushed beside a sturdy pine sapling freshly broken above the root and bowed down across the flattened place. At first glance it appeared like just another bed; a second one said it wasn't.

"Are you thinking what I am?" Dick asked.

"Something was crouched here last night, watching the elk herd from behind the log."

"Something with the strength to pull that tree over and break it almost clean off. You and I together couldn't have done that."

We found no tracks or hair samples, but on the return upstream to camp the wind carried briefly what Dick thought was a rotten smell and I compared to a dirty horse blanket.

"Would you say 'fetid' was the word?"

"I'd say fetid's close enough."

Another wave of rain came in as we climbed up the drainage and hiked the logging road back to camp, sheltering the holstered pistols under our waterproofs. The camper stood dripping in the rain as we approached, and then I heard Dick say, "Hey! What happened?"

The awning above the door had been lifted off the ground and flung back over the roof as neatly almost as if it had been stowed there. Stretching to reach so high, we succeeded at last in pulling it down from the roof and rearranging the aluminum poles. None was bent, but the nylon eyes holding the bolts in place were torn clean through.

"It must have been a wind gust that did it," Dick said finally.

"Except there wasn't any wind."

"Maybe a microburst when that latest storm came through."

"There hasn't been any wind, I'm telling you."

"The awning's on the lee side of the trailer, anyway."

The grass was trampled into paths between the trailer and the forest edge, but it was impossible to say whether it had been done by us or someone—some *thing*—else.

"You understand," Dick added, "that, if it wasn't the wind, we've just had a warning."

"I understand. It's almost a staple of the literature at this point."

We packed the camp in that evening and pulled out next morning. The roof of the camper when we cranked it down had a sizable dent from one of the poles being flung violently downward, as if from a height of ten or twelve feet. We didn't want to have to shoot anything, and it was beginning to rain again, anyway.

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Modern Editions of Classic Works for Readers Today

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF JAMES M. BUCHANAN

photograph from Pressens Bild, Stockholm, Sweden

James M. Buchanan receiving the Alfred Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences from Carl XVI Gustaf, king of Sweden, 1986

"My interest in understanding how the economic interaction process works has always been instrumental to the more inclusive purpose of understanding how we can learn to live one with one another without engaging in Hobbesian war and without subjecting ourselves to the dictates of the state."

—James M. Buchanan

In one of the major publishing endeavors of recent decades, *The Collected Works of James M. Buchanan*, the Nobel laureate in Economics in 1986, is being released in twenty volumes under the auspices of Liberty Fund, Inc.

The series will include ten monographs and all of the important journal articles, papers, and essays that Buchanan has produced in a distinguished career spanning more than a half-century. The monographs will appear in a new form and with the addition of indexes in those cases where no index or only a partial index was originally provided. In addition, each volume includes a foreword by one of the series' three editors, Professors Geoffrey Brennan, Hartmut Kliemt, and Robert D. Tollison, each of whom is a distinguished economist in his own right.

The principal monographs include such famous works as *The Calculus of Consent* and *The Limits of Liberty*, and also such gems as *Cost and Choice: An Inquiry in Economic Theory.*

The papers will be presented in nine volumes and will be arranged thematically. The sole exception is Volume 1, which includes the editors' Introduction to Buchanan's thought and entire corpus and a rich sampling of some of Buchanan's most important or characteristic writings. The entire series will include:

Volume 1: *The Logical Foundations of Constitutional Liberty*
Volume 2: *Public Principles of Public Debt*
Volume 3: *The Calculus of Consent*
Volume 4: *Public Finance in Democratic Process*
Volume 5: *The Demand and Supply of Public Goods*
Volume 6: *Cost and Choice*
Volume 7: *The Limits of Liberty*
Volume 8: *Democracy in Deficit*
Volume 9: *The Power to Tax*
Volume 10: *The Reason of Rules*
Volume 11: *Politics by Principle, Not Interest*
Volume 12: *Economic Inquiry and Its Logic*
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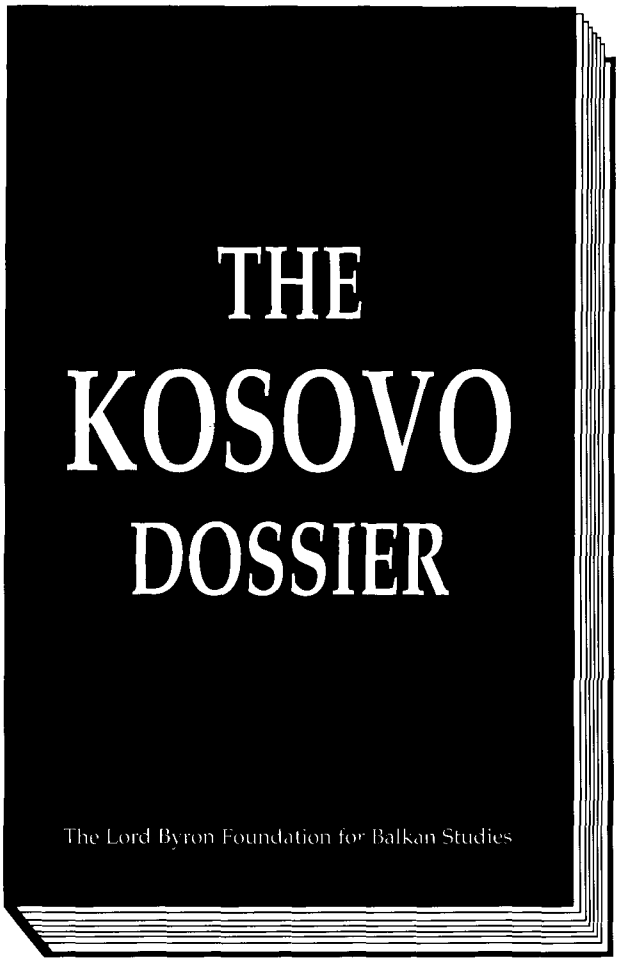

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